The Minstrel with the Selfsame Song

And Other Poems

By Charles A. Fisher

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AND

OTHER POEMS

BY

CHARLES A. FISHER

CHICAGO
NINETEEN HUNDRED AND THREE

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THE MINSTREL
WITH THE SELFSAME SONG

THE MINSTREL.

The day was young, and all the freshness of the dewy morning,
On early summer meadows sparkled in the sun's bright sheen,
When, as if risen from the earth, and without note of warning,
That strange, fantastic figure stood upon the village green.

Within his hand he held a pilgrim's staff, all gnarled and twisted,
His ruddy face a smile of gentle melancholy wore;
From 'neath a pluméd courtier's cap, gray locks waved as they listed,
With changeful breezes,—in his arm an ancient harp he bore.

Of noble mien and port, like princely forms that, on the pages
Of blurred and tattered parchments, in gray cloisters still endure,—
Clad in forgotten garb that tokened long since vanished ages,
Such was this wandering minstrel wight—half monk, half troubadour.

Grayhaired, yet keen of eye, in him youth and old age seemed blended;
Like some quaint,dusty portrait stepping from an ancient frame,
He suddenly appeared and sang his song, and when he wended
His way from thence, no one knew whither,—nor from whence he came.

On holy Sabbath days he sought some unfrequented village;
Not for applause he sang, nor as one reckoning on reward,—
Where lowly folk found refuge from the week's bleak toil and tillage,
There did his harp resound in soft, sad, minor monochord.

Of those who heard his song, some wept, some scoffed, while some few, deeming
All Godless him who on the Lord's day earthly love extols,
Frowned darkly—did these pious wights—and charged him with blaspheming,—
Churls trembling for their gold the week, the Sabbath for their souls.

The minstrel gently smiled, as if nor tears nor frowns he minded,
Nor hearkened to the sighs, the threats, the murmurs of the throng;
His visage rapt, seemed unto human visage all but blinded,—
He saw not.—He but paused to tune his harp, and sang his song

And this his song, though varied, was as one that varies never,—
'Twas still the same, like twice a score of timbrels and one clang;
By some strange fate, this eerie bard seemed doomed to intone forever
The selfsame song. And here who will may read the lay he sang

That summer day, to those who on the green in wonder hearkened,
Much marveling at the things that are and those that do but seem;—
But he, the unbidden bard, when on the fields the twilight darkened,
Took up his harp and vanished into shadow like a dream.

INNOCENCE.

While youth is yet unseared, unsoiled,
And passion's venomed snare uncoiled,—
Life's skies all fair above us,—
'Tis so delicious to be spoiled
By those who love us.

A warm affection, never cloying,
Awaits our coming and our going,
And eager welcomes greet us;
Upon the threshold, with loud joying,
The children meet us.

Ah, precious hearth where, pure as air,
The soul may soar, the heart from care
Be free; where, night and morning,
Both thought and footstep flying fare
With ceaseless yearning!

Seek, youth, such dearly sacred haunt!—
With joy awaited,
Rebaptized at affection's font,
Thy comfort and thine every want
By love anticipated,

Thy path a fragrant homage strewing,
To higher aims thy spirit wooing;
Where lofty souls admire thee,—
In all thy thinking and thy doing
Nobly inspire thee.—

If in youth's vague, impetuous ways
This boon be thine, Oh, sing its praise!
And art thou of the gifted,
Oh, sing it through thy nights and days,
With voice uplifted!

JUNE.

"Come, let us go to Fairview Hill,
The children, he and you,
And gaze upon the drowsy town
And on the distant view.

"The dusty streets are stifling hot
This summer afternoon,
On Fairview Hill soft breezes blow,—
It is the month of June.

"The little ones may romp at will
Upon the green hillside,
While we lie on the grass, and dream
Into the eventide."

Thus wouldst thou speak on summer days;
And all thy heart was good,
And all thy soul with goodness glowed,
And loving motherhood.

And we three lounged together there
Upon the fragrant grass,
And watched, with his sleek flock of sheep,
The brooding shepherd pass;

Beheld the fleecy clouds drift on
Across the far blue skies,
While, vainly, the dear little ones
Would chase the butterflies.

And he was lost in distant thought,
And you and I—who knows
What vague, unfashioned promptings then
Within our hearts arose;—

What dreamy yearnings, like the still,
  Warm breath of summer noon,
Deep down within our hearts were born,
  Those gentle days of June!

Scarce did we dare the charm to break,
  That lay on soul and sense.
He uttered, ever and anon,
  Some thought of consequence;

And then we pondered on his words,
  While, joyous, frank and free,
The children stirred the echoes, as
  They shouted in their glee.

And thou didst breathe a murmur sweet,
  A prayer to the Unseen,
That all our days might be like this—
  So peaceful, so serene!

FRIENDSHIP.

There is a friendship, known to noble hearts
  That worship in communion at the Muses' shrine;
Unlike the bond of those who but the parts
  Of host and guest exchange, and drink each other's wine.
Free from caprice and no abatement knowing,
  From envy ever free, and ever glowing
    With ardour all divine.

Rare mortals, on unselfish mission bent!—
  While man with man for sordid gain in compact plods,
Or seeks in friendship but emolument—
  Your compact dies not when beneath the silent sods

Ye lie; still through your works the spirit voices
A noble bond at which mankind rejoices,—
Ye are as demigods!

Two towering rocks upon a stormbound shore,
United at the base, like things no more to part;—
Where thunders crash and where the tempests roar,
Where vain the breakers dash and vain the lightnings dart—
Yet but a tender trifle—heark and wonder—
Could break such bonds, could cleave such souls asunder:
A woman's loving heart!

BLINDNESS.

He was my friend and loved me well,
And thou wert his by right.
Then whence was born that strange, sweet spell?
For though our proud hearts were not lowly,
Yet thine was pure,—thy thoughts were holy
In Heaven's sight.

He did not chide in wrathful scorn,
Yet must have seen full well
The love by which our hearts were torn.
Why did he smile so strangely, faintly,
While yet we deemed our love all saintly,—
Love, canst thou tell?

Or was he dumb for pity's sake,
Or could he smile at fate?
Or was it that he never spake,
While yet we loved so fondly, truly,
Because he feared to chide unduly
And could not hate?

Or was it but a husband's pride
That grew from hour to hour?
Or did his soul, all mystified,
Resign itself to dumb indulgence
At sight of Love's undreamed effulgence
And Passion's power?

Or was he mute because he dreamed
Some high artistic fantasy,
Oblivious to Love's flame, that seemed
To grow more warm as Troth grew colder;—
Sweet frenzy, waxing bold and bolder,—
Did he not see!

THE BOOK.

What book was that we read together
When we were all alone?—
Without was storm and wintry weather,
Upon the hearth the lurid embers shone,
Casting gaunt, fitful shadows on the walls.

What thrill, like tremor of a downy feather
That from some angel's wing swift from the heavens falls,
Quivered beneath the limpid tone
Of thy sweet voice! Throughout the dimlit halls
The night was hushed, save when the wind made moan.

Dost thou remember, dear,—
What book was that we read alone,
When no one else was near?

'Twas not some light, some dalliant version
Of lovelorn rhymer; not some dreamy, Persian,
Melodious lay of amorous delight,
Such as, in secret silence of the night,
The prudish trembling con and shyly hide
From prying glances in the fair noontide.

What was it moved our hearts unto the core?—
For thy great soul was far too purified
To be by aught but by the noblest stirred;
The frivolous strain passed by thee all unheard,
And but the highest led thee to adore.

Why did thy firm, white hand let fall the book?
Why didst thou gaze on me with that far look,—
Ineffable?—Could there be lure in lore!

Our breathing ceased to stir the air.—
Was it some undefined, some mighty longing
That took us unaware,
Or but the simple cadence of sweet songing,
That bore us to the skies?—
Why was I spellbound by those eyes,
By that belovèd raven hair
I could not else but gaze on;—how,—
Oh, say, how could I dare
To kiss thy brow!

PLATONIC LOVE.

Speak not to me of pure, Platonic love.
Ye, who by soaring fancies still deluded,
Dream that man's love can be of earth denuded;
Pause ere ye prate of that ye wot not of.—

If ye be two who deem that, high above
  The vulgar passions of the common throng,
Your lips may meet in love, your souls be strong
  With holy sainthood of the Spotless Dove,—
Oh, then, fond hearts, too late to cry beware!
  Far better ye had never made beginning;
In vain to shun the sorrow and the sinning,
  When ye are swiftly borne, ye know not where.—
Ye can be nevermore what ye have been,
  Nor can ye e'er repent you of the Sin.

LOVE AND DUTY.

If there were Love within thee,
And beside thee
  The glowing flush of Beauty
That would win thee,
  And faint the voice of Duty
From afar, to chide thee;—
  Think, gentle youth,
What might betide thee,
  Twixt Love and Truth!

What way thy spirit wended,
  Naught to guide thee;
And still beside thee
  A voice of anguish, blended
With joyful tears, like dew,
  A palpitating bosom, close enfolded;—
Speak, youth, what wouldst thou do?
  Where wouldst thou hide thee,
But with thy burning visage in that bosom moulded!

To Beauty's charms add graces the most gracious—
  All woman's noblest—to enthrall thee,
And when thy soul is soaring through the spacious,

Unutterable altitudes of bliss,—
Thy senses all engulfed in agonies of Love—
What if that far, faint Voice should call thee?

That Voice, from o'er the brink of the abyss,
Like to some fateful admonition from above,
Should sound, in accents growing loud and louder,
Its direful warning to appall thee,—
Wouldst thou renounce that fierce, ecstatic kiss,
Or would thy prideful love grow proud and prouder?
Speak, noble youth, what thinkst thou would befall thee
Upon those giddy heights?

Wouldst thou not fold her and enshroud her
With all thy ardent soul,—Oh, tell me this!
Would not all Love and Duty be confounded,
Though evermore that warning Voice resounded
Through all thy days and nights!

THE KISS.

The twilight shades were gently falling,
And dark and darker grew the room
Where, side by side, we stood alone.
The evening bell kept calling, calling;
With faint, oppressive monotone
It filled the crimson-curtained gloom.

Our lips were mute, nor dared to utter
The thoughts that in our bosoms seethed;
And we could feel—so close we stood—
The heart's fierce, palpitating flutter,—
Delicious agonies that would
Burst into flood, if we but breathed.

What was it tore our clinging lips asunder,
When soul from soul that frenzied kiss had won!
What flung us on our knees in writhing shame,
While in the dusk the tinkling bell, like thunder,
Tolled through the heart's abysms that cry of blame:
"My God, my God in Heaven, what have we done!"

Yet ere we parted, joy unbounded
Engulfed the throes of agony;
And each new kiss dispelled new fears,
The voice of Conscience all confounded,
When thou didst murmur through thy tears:
"Now am I sure thou lovest me!"

NIGHT.

The moon is low; the bloom of joy is on the night.—
To tread the dim recesses of some silent street,
Arm linked in arm, all heedless of the hour, how sweet!
'Tis dark and chill, yet in the heart what warmth and light!
With slow, oblivious step to wander thus along;
What, though no moonlit prospect here of hill and dale,
No music of the lute, no song of nightingale,
While thus the heart is full of buoyancy and song!—

Hark!—Hear'st the solemn bell of the cathedral call?
Alas, did we come forth so late so soon to part!
Here in this mossgrown corner let our parting be;—
Another kiss,—we are alone,—my sweet, sweet heart.—

"Hush, love! What shadow creeps along the buttressed wall?"—
'Tis but a sombre priest stalks t'ward the Sacristy.

DAY.

Away with sadness!
  Aye, let us laugh with joy,
For life is joyous, and we love;
  The vials of Love's gladness
Have deluged us from Heaven above.
  Allpotent Love, who called thee coy?—
What prayerful sage bemoaned thy badness?
  Thou art a generous treasuretrove,
Found on a bleak and barren shore,
  And all shall know thy sacred madness
    And Sorrow be no more!

Most radiant of all things created,
  Let all thy banners be unfurled!
Not e'en the loveless shall be hated,
  For thou art all Creation's mother.
By thy sweet will, all care and cark
  Of humankind shall to the dark,
Profoundest depths of night be hurled,—
  For when we twain embrace each other
    We do embrace the World!

GOODNESS.

"Oh, clasp my knees again, and pray
  That we may both be strong;
Oh, let me hear thy goodness say,
  We two shall do no wrong.

"Speak in thy rich, deep, gentle way
  And lay thy cheek upon my knee,
And through thy broken sobs—nay, nay,
  My dearest love, it must not be!"

A FAIRY TALE.

Three fishermaidens of the Rhine
  Stood on the shore at break of day.
They gazed afar with wistful eyne
  And sweetly sang: "Hear us, kind Fay!

"The sun is low and chill the morn,
  Drive in the fishes, great and small;
Oh, think on fisherfolk forlorn
  And grant thy maids a bounteous haul!"

Three blooming maidens; wondrous fair
  Was one, like sunshine to the sight,
And one all draped in auburn hair,—
  The third, like raven of the night.

They drew the net with eager hand
  And when they opened it, behold!
A single fish lay on the strand,
  As beautiful as molten gold.

"How odd! I wonder how 'twould taste!"—
  Thus spake she of the auburn hair.
"For shame, for shame!" cried out in haste
  The fishermaiden flaxen fair;

"To think of boiling such a fish!
  Quick—bear it home,—and there we will
Put it into the big glass dish
  And set it on the windowsill."

And while they wrangled what to do,
  The blackhaired maiden softly sighed,
Picked up the fish and gently threw
  It back into the rushing tide.

From where it sank there rose aloft
The Fairy on their startled sight.
She smiled, and spake in accents soft
Unto the maidens, thus: "I might

"To two of you unkindness show
Who would have been unkind to me;
But let that pass,—yet you must know,
The darkhaired shall most favored be.

"Choose now, you two,—what is your wish?
Supreme delight of Love, or ease
And peace. Thus speaks the fairy fish
Forgiving you,—choose as you please."

"Oh grant me comfort, peace and ease,"
The blond replied. "And as for me,"
Sighed Auburnhair, "Oh, what are these
Without Love's highest ecstasy!

Let me but know Love's keen delights!"—
"Why stands my ravenhaired so coy,—
Wouldst ken of Love the depths and heights?"
"Fain would I drain the cup of Joy,

"Would know the uttermost of bliss,—
Untrammeled freedom of the heart;
Yet would I choose beside all this
To play the honored matron's part."

"Proud child, what dost thou ask of me?—
Thou wouldst, and yet thou wouldest not!
Such powers not to the fairies be,
Nor to the gods themselves I wot.

"Weep not, but treasure up thy tears,
My darkhaired maiden of the Rhine;
For in the tide of coming years
A precious sorrow shall be thine!"

DESIRE.

Why do thy moist and soulful eyes
  Entrance with fond desire
My spirit sore, and tantalize
  My tortured heart that would be free!
Spellbound, I seek their dazzling glow,
  And dare within that liquid fire
To read Love's answer—yet I know
    It must not be, it must not be.

Thy soft warm cheek of roseate hue,
  Ah, would I might caress!
Thy blooming mouth—so sadly sweet—
  Quivering with all Love's tenderness;
How would my burning kisses meet
  Those parted lips that, with the dew
Of passionate breathing wet,
  Blush with enticing witchery
And beckon me! And yet—and yet,
    It must not be, it must not be!

Again, again I turn my gaze,
  And long upon the heaving billow
Of thy white breast my head to pillow,—
  My soul adrift in dreamy maze
On that soft, creamy crested sea
  Of loveliness.
    Ah, hear me tell
My secret hopes, in whispers fond,
  Of longed for joys that lie beyond!
Cease, cease! I feel— Ah, feel too well,—
    It must not be, it must not be!

PLEA.

And still the lovely roses bloom
  Upon thy cheek, and still they doom
My soul to worship—still consume
  My heart in anguish, sad and sable,

For fond hopes flown when doubt returns.
  Still, still my heart with longing yearns,
Still all my very lifeblood burns
  In love irrevocable.

Come,—lay thy soft warm cheek on mine,
  Thy lips unto my lips incline;—
Oh, come and let thy moist eye shine
  Once more in joy unutterable!

LOVE'S ABANDON.

"Oh, look not on me with those pleading eyes—
  Those eyes that haunt me in my very dreams.
When silent longing in their gazing gleams,
  It stifles all the stern, repentant cries
That nightly unto Heaven my soul confess.

Lovebounden unto one, and ah, so loath
  To break my duty and my sacred oath,—
Sweet friend,—help thou me in my helplessness!

Oft was I chidden for mine icy pride.—
  Ah, heart of ice, all melted now and spilt,
Beneath thy gaze, upon the boundless sea
  Of our great love! 'Tis thine, beloved, to guide
That surging flood;—do with me as thou wilt.—
  I cannot bear the thought of losing thee!".

ILLUSION.

"Sometimes at night I see two faces,—
  Belovèd, tell me, what is this?
Two kisses in one burning kiss,—
  One living form, yet two embraces;
And through my quivering heart there chases
  The tremor of a twofold bliss.

"Oh, torture of this love in sorrow,—
  The bliss of Heaven, the pangs of Hell!
New terrors e'en from joy to borrow,—
  In nightly anguish doomed to dwell!—
But when *you* greet me on the morrow,
  Then, dear my friend, then all is well!"

FAREWELL.

How often have I said farewell
  And vowed I would return no more;
Yet came anon and found—Ah well,—
  And found thee waiting at the door?

Though to repent us, both be fain,
  And both dissimulation loathe;
I tell thee, love, it is in vain,
  For we are helpless—helpless both!

No pardon where is no regret;—
  The sin is, Ah, so wondrous sweet!—
Farewell for aye, my love—and yet
  Tomorrow finds me at thy feet.

LOVE CANNOT SAY.

Within the crimson-cushioned pew
  We sat on still Good Friday morn;—
A thousand hearts bewept anew
  The sufferings by the Saviour borne,—
But not the heart of me and you,—
    Love cannot mourn.

And oft within that sacred place
  The organ, echoing far and near,
Brought God with mortals face to face;
  Thine eye would drop a rapturous tear,
Yet heard we not that song of Grace,—
    Love cannot hear.

We two sat at the play together;—
  Why in thy heart this anxious fear!
Without was storm and wintry weather,—
  Dost thou recall the Book, my dear?

A guilty spouse to tragic death
  Was doomed. Ah, love, what makes thee
    tremble?
'Tis but a play,—why hold thy breath?—
  These be but actors who dissemble;
Let them be killed, and let them kill!

What love were that *we* could portray,
  If we but dared! For Love can sway
With gentler voice and simpler skill
  Than all this ranting in a play.
Love can do all things, dear, but pray—
  For what is good or what is ill,
    Love cannot say!

THE SONG.

They sing of Guinevere and Launcelot,
  They tell of Tristan and of fair Isolde;
Of queens and lovelorn knights, I know not what,—
  Songs ever new, like tales before untold.
The lovers and their bards—Ah, well away!—
  Were laid long since beneath the silent mold;
And yet these tales seem as of yesterday.

What cares the world,—one love the less, the more!
  He who has suffered cannot choose but sing—
To-day as yesterday, forevermore,
  Like some strange warbler on perennial wing,
Though heart of Love be crushed into the dust,—
  That ancient lay must chaunt from shore to shore,
Must sing the selfsame song, because he must.

"OH, LET US FLY!"

"Oh, let us fly;
  Far, far across the trackless sea
To some strange country, you and I!—
  I cannot live this living lie,
    I cannot bear to part with thee!

"Oh, let us dare
  To face the world and banish ruth,—
To love as do the birds of air
  And live, no longer doomed to bear
    This hideous torment of untruth!

"Oh, fly with me!
  I have no more to lose, to give;
All that was mine I gave to thee.—
  Once from this dastard shame set free,
    Oh, then to love—Oh, then to live!

"Ah, do not fear,
For that mine eyes with tears are wet,
Remorse shall ever creep anear.
Let worst betide, ne'er shalt thou hear
The stifled murmur of regret.

"Oh, let us fly!
E'en to some bleak and desert strand,—
What waste is bleak when Love is nigh?—
But that, with free, uplifted eye,
We two may wander, hand in hand.

"What need of vow—
Of plighted oath our troth to keep!
What oath could plight us closer now?"—
Hush,—hark, belovèd,— hearest thou
The children moaning in their sleep!

A DREAM.

Last night, my love, I had a wondrous dream—:
We two met at the gates of Paradise
And stood where countless hosts throughout the skies,
In endless circles round the Throne Supreme,
Assembled on the awful Day of Doom.

"We thank thee, Father, for the gift of Love—
Whence came it if it came not from above?
Its anguish we have known, its joyous bloom,
And all its sin."—
The multitude gave ear,
And hushed, in silence hearkened to our story.

Then hand in hand we knelt, but not in fear.
"One boon we crave, Thou Everlasting One,—
Oh, banish us forever from Thy Glory,
So thou do part us not;—Thy Will be done!"

COMPASSION.

"Once did I scorn the erring
With righteous scorn.
Should some forlorn,
Some sinful sister, faring
Adown the bitter path of shame,
Have sought me in those austere days
And knelt for pity at my gate,
She had found naught but blame.
No gleam of mercy had she met,
No soothing hand, outstretched to raise
Remorseful misery from the dust,—
No voice compassionate.

"Ah, my belovèd, God is just!—
Oh, whither art thou flown,
Thou marble pride of earlier years!
To pity now that heart of stone
Is melted in contrition's tears,
That haughty spirit gentler grown.

"Faint heart, all crushed beneath the stress
Of Love's strong weakness, canst thou find
No comfort from above?—
Wouldst thou know woman's tenderness,
Shun thy proud sisters, chastely blind
To passion's ruth!
Seek those who know of Love
The sweetly bitter truth,
And unto these confess
Thine anguish.—They will bind
Thy wounds;—guilt makes us wondrous kind."

ODE TO PASSION.

Hear us, Oh Passion, thou whom we adore,—
To thee, to thee alone is all our song!
We are of those thy potent wing hath borne
Unto the empyrean pinnacles of Joy;
But from that brief and brilliant ecstasy
To be cast down to darkness and to dust;—
And yet we worship thee.
From whence art thou?—
Art thou from God? How, then, canst thou unclasp
Hands clenched in prayer, uplifted to the skies,—
Within God's very temple turn the sobs
Of penitence from out their Heavenward course,
Unto the footsteps of thy lurid throne!
Thou canst not be of Satan's handiwork,
For Hell itself could borrow from thy flames,
And would, but that thy tortures are so sweet.

Sects come and go, religions pass away,
And priests still curse thee by their various gods;
Age after age would govern thee with things
That men call Laws,—would bind with frigid oaths
Thy wild, despotic turbulence. And thou!—
Thou smil'st, but by such vain devices veiled
From mortal ken, upon thine eminence,
Whence, as from ambush, thou dost rule mankind.

Youth is thy sport, yet heads all gray with eld
Bow down to thee. Some die not having seen—
Not all can bear to gaze upon the Sun—
These let'st thou pass unscathed, nor dost thou deign
Unfold the fullness of thy glowing might
To all the many myriads that do grope,
Twixt joy and sorrow, to a common grave;
To some thou art but as the mellow glow

Shed by the moon upon a summer night,—
These do give thanks to God for what thou gav'st,
And long not for the joys of Paradise.

But he whom thou hast chosen for thine own,
To whom thou hast displayed thy majesty
In all its awful glory and despair,—
He who hath stood upon thy dizzy peaks
And kissed thy dazzling hand, e'en as it hurled
His prideful heart from those exquisite heights
Down to confusion and to utter gloom;—
He who hath worshiped thus can kneel no more.
To him nor throne, nor altar, like to thine,
For what is in the Heavens above and all
That lurks down in Damnation's deepest depths,
That hath he known;—henceforth his song is thine!

He cannot fly thee whom thou dost exalt,
Nor would he if he could. He can but sing
Thy praise, though he unto the senseless void
Were doomed to sing.
Thou art Immensity,
And all that was, and is, and is to be!
The ages fade away, and still are born
Anew; but thou art ancient as the Air.
Meseems when Chaos was thou must have been,
And from impenetrable night arose
That hymn of homage, Passion, unto thee,
That song of songs than which none other is—
The song that, echoing through the rolling spheres,
Shall still re-echo in the dome of Time,
Till all things fall to naught and Earth, all spent.
In cold, illimitable Space shall swing
Among the fragments of the Universe.

THE PICTURE.

What greater sin than wish another dead
Whom we have wronged, yet cannot help but love!

No secret ever was between us twain,
Save that dark shadow on the hearts of both
That neither dared to lift. There was a time
We worked in cheerful emulation side by side
And sang and painted through the speeding day.
Whate'er conception thy high spirit wrought,
Still was I joyful sharer in the thrill
Of birth,—the artist's noble recompense;
And when the day began to wane, *she* came—
A gracious inspiration and repose.
Then did we linger in the twilight hour,
My noble friend, to hear thee sing my songs.

But now there is a painting thou wouldst hide
From us, and thou hast grown so pale and wan,—
Dost work alone from early dawn till dark,
These many months. So little do we heed
Thy coming and thy going now, that all
This anxious caution thou mightst well have spared;—
How long since we have asked thee what thou dost!—

Ah, Love is selfish and considers naught,
Wrapped up within the all-engrossing ban
Of its own ecstasy, and to the world
And its great deeds in sweet oblivion lost!

Rude was the wakening from our ardent trance
When, on that doleful day, we found thee prone
Before thy mighty canvas stretched, as one
Whose hand shall hold the palette nevermore.
Nor was there need thou grasp thy brush again,
Forsooth, for, what thy cunning hand had wrought

Unto completion in those lonely hours,
Was of a mastery thou couldst reach no more
In all thy days; the picture, that must needs
Bequeath thy name down through the lands and years
To all who love the beautiful and great,
And bring wealth's independence to thy door.
Who knows it not or has not heard the theme:—
"Francesca Rimini!"
Observe them well!
The farfamed lovers in this tragedy,
Their features in ethereal beauty limned,
That, like a blessed halo, crowns the dross
Of grievous wrong wrought by voluptuous flesh.

Great wast thou in thine injury, my friend,—
Far greater in the magic of thine Art!

As thine unconscious models have we sat,
And thou,—thou hast immortalized us both!
Thy pencil thou hast dipped into our hearts,
Yet with soft pity swathed the dole of Sin;—
As noble as thyself is thy revenge!

We spake no word, but bore thee to thy couch,
And through the weary days and dismal nights
Nursed thy faint spirit back to light and life.
Scant service this! What less could we have done
For some forsaken wretch, o'ercome with toil,
Whom Fate had cast, exhausted, at the gate?

Oh, hadst thou been less gentle all these years!
Oft in repentant moments have I wished
The gods had moulded thee of lesser clay.
Why hast thou not confronted me long since,
In all the justness of a mortal's wrath?
Into thy clenchèd fist fain had I thrust
The cold, avenging steel, that should have sent
My guilty soul down to deservèd doom.—

What hideous fancies come to haunt the brain
In silent night!—
The fever now is past,
And balmy midnight breezes gently waft
Sweet odours from the garden o'er the couch,
Whereon his wandering spirit long has tossed,
Now in deep convalescent slumber wrapped.
We stand beside him and our glances meet;—
Oh, fierce, despairing gleam of loving eyes!
Have weary vigils hellish promptings strewn
Within the brain, to drive us mad indeed?
Are ancient chronicles come true again,
That thus some demon of the nether world
Can by unholy magic warp the soul
Of sinful man, until his sense discern
The speech of monstrous beast and ominous bird!
Hark to the burden of the raven's croak,
That hoarsely through the casement floats, from out
The dank, remorseless gloom of murky night—:
"Would, he would wake no more—would wake no more!"

AFAR.

'Tis done, and we shall meet no more;
And there has been no last farewell—
No agony of parting kiss,
Of Love's despair no parting knell.

Still dreams the town within the grey,
Dank haze where night and morning meet,
The Autumn chill is on the air;—
I wander down the silent street.

The meads are fresh with newmown hay,—
I wander through the dewy dawn;
The harvest scent is on the fields,—
I wander on—I wander on.

The birds are piping gleeful songs
And there is music in the rill,
The plodding toilers fare afield;—
I wander on across the hill,

The hill of sweet familiar paths,
Where erst we loitered to and fro,
In those fair days of innocence,
So far away—so long ago.

The sun has broken through the mist,—
All nature murmurs joyously;
Oh, God, is it thy will man should,
Of all that breathes, most wretched be?

When in Thine Image mortal man
Was fashioned by Thy high decree,
Didst Thou foredoom him to despair—
Didst Thou ordain man's misery?

When Thou didst plant Love in his heart,
Didst Thou the seeds of Evil strew,—
Or pleased Thee but to have him sin
So that he might for pardon sue?

If I offend Thee with my cry,
Send down Thy lightnings from above.—
Flash fell destruction on my head;—
What is this life without this Love!

To suffer man to scale the heights
Of bliss, then steep his soul, all shent,
In lasting guilt—That canst Thou do,
Great God,—and Thou Omnipotent!

FAME.

Love, thou wouldst see me great for thou art proud of me,—
And yet ambition is but as the things of air;
Less boots the praise the many sing aloud of me
Than silent censure some few chosen hearts may bear.
Far better thou prepare at once the shroud of me
Than that my soul should cringe to do the deeds men dare
For sake of that vain eminence the world calls Fame.

Is not to say, "I will not!" greater than "I will?"
Wouldst have me climb ignoble paths to power until,
Mayhap, the fickle throng shall shout thy lover's name,
While better names abide in proud obscurity?—

Nay, let me wander still and sing from door to door,
Of that great love of ours, till I can sing no more;—
Say, dearest heart, is not this fame enough for thee!

FORGET ME NOT.

Three little flowers of simple form!
What can they be?
She gave them me
One evening as we parted,
With a slight pressure, soft and warm,
Of her dear hand, and tenderhearted
Glance of moist eyes that dimly spake:
"It is a trifle I would have you take,
And keep with you."—I kissed her brow,
I said—I know not what,—
But as I gaze upon them now
The flowerets speak: "Forget me not!"

REMEMBRANCE.

Weep, weep the bitter tear
  For the joy of the days that are gone,
Weep, till the eye is dull and blear
  And the visage is pale and wan!

Wail, wail for the ancient woe
  That shall ever rise again,
The Sin and the Sorrow of long ago,—
  The passion, the bliss, and the pain!

Weep and wail for ever and aye
  O'er the hopes and the joys that have fled;
For my only joy is to weep and sigh
  Where the shades of memory tread!

PASSION'S PRAYER.

Blow, blow
  The drifting snow,
Thou rugged wintry gale!
  Lift my soul with a keen delight,
Bear me along in thy dizzy flight,
  Midst the sleet and the hail!

Come, with compassion
Congeal my passion—
  Gather me up in thy icy arms—
Away, o'er the plains and the howling sea,
Bear me, and bury my agony
  In the Lethe of Winter's storms!

Delicious dumbness
Shall, with cold numbness,
  Memory in sweet oblivion steep;
And, borne afar on the northern blast,
My love and my grief shall find at last
  The joy of a painless sleep.

THE BLOOMING ARBOURS BY THE WAY.

There are some niches on the road of Life
  Whence one may view the strange procession as it passes,—
Gaze with contempt upon the bitter strife
  And sip his wine, and dally with the lasses.

Fair blooming arbours all along the way,
  Affording solace unto whomsoever chooses;
The brimming beaker, beckoning us to stay,
  Its roseate refuge unto none refuses.

Drink! And thou seest, as figments of a dream,
  The frantic throng to gilded baubles e'er aspiring,
Confounding things that are with those that seem—
  Still hastening from enjoyment to desiring.

Drink! Thou shalt see, as one who stands aloof—
  For in good wine there lurks such subtle necromancy—
Men's eager toiling, Fate's own web and woof,
  Are but vain trifles to thy ruddy fancy.

Thou glidest like a god through verdant vales,
  Where languorous, swimming eyes invite thee debonairly;
Thou hear'st the rapturous song of nightingales,
  Mid groves of asphodel discoursing rarely.

Oh, seek them, ere with dismal Sabbath chimes
And sombre dirges, idle mourners gather, thronging
Around thy pallid corpse! Seek them betimes,
These joyful bowers, so full of blissful songing!

Resolve, thy sad heart shall no more repine,
Shall in Lethean ecstacy ingulf its sorrow;
Aye, crush the luscious fruit and quaff the wine,—
But reck not of the wakening on the morrow!

BANISHMENT.

If I but knew that thou wert dead,
Thy charms all in the tomb enshrined—
No more with ceaseless longing fed,
My heart could be to Fate resigned.

If I could think of thee as flown
Where the eternal requiems roll,
Then might I claim thee for mine own—
A chastened idol of the soul.

But thus to muse on thee afar,
In visions feel thy kiss anew;
To see thy smile in every star,
Thy tears in every drop of dew—

To hear in Music's every strain
But echoes of departed bliss,
Yet know we must not meet again;—
What cruel punishment is this!

REMORSE.

Take thyself hence, gaunt, sombre spectre of Remorse!
Mine eyes the shadow that thou castest cannot see,
Where shades of resignation and austerity
For so long time have held their cold, relentless course,
Save when some joyous gleam from recollection's source
Has gilded all my way with visions of the rarest.
The tears I sometimes shed are not of those thou bearest,
And all thy terrors in that flood lose all their force.
Bar thou the rugged pathway at the midnight hour.—
Say fervent love is sin and passion is a crime;
Let direful dread be written on thy ghastly brow,—
A single vision then shall vanquish all thy power,
And I shall feel in memory of a joy sublime,
My heart is no abiding place for such as thou!

HELIOTROPE.

Ah, dear remembrancer of vanished joys!
Why dost recall with fullness of thy scent
Far memories of a heedless, high content,
And ecstasies so deep they fain would cloy?
Thine odours rise like incense to the sky
From glowing embers of an altar fire,
Where once blazed fierce the flame of Love's desire.—

She loved thee too; none knew but she and I,
How well!—
Oft wast thou with the red rose mated,
Her bosom heaving 'neath the flower of flowers;
And bloom and perfume-haunted sped the hours
That rapture bore to hearts all rapture sated.—

Emblem of Joy, but nevermore of Hope
Art thou, rich, sombre scent of Heliotrope!

BE STILL, MY HEART.

Be still, my heart, to bursting filled!
Nay, voice them not, the joys that thrilled
  Thy secret echoes —Ah, so long
Oh, hide the shrine where thou hast knelt;
The ecstasies that thou hast felt
  Are far too sacred, e'en for song.

REGRET.

Again the spell of Love I feel,
Anew soft eyes would tempt me kneel
    At Love's sweet shrine—
So warm the radiance of their glow—
But not, Oh, love of long ago,
    But not like thine.

Forms of the grace that seraphs knew
With lovelit tears, like blessèd dew
      Dropped from above,
Would gently smooth the brow of care,
And Ah, full well they love, but ne'er
      As thou didst love!

Oh joys, long drifted into gloom!
No more the rich red roses bloom;
      No more for me
The keen delights that thrill the heart,
Nor, distant love—where'er thou art—
      Nor yet for thee!

The memory of a bliss long flown,
The souls' devotion, all our own
In days of yore,—
These in sad cadence prophesy,
When joy would wake again, that I
Shall love no more.

PANACEA.

Sing thou the heart's own song.
Sing of the endless throng
Doomed to perennial wrong,
Burdened of Earth.
Seek thy tranquility
In Art's utility;—
This thy nobility.
This be thy worth!

Yet, lest thy soul wax proud,
Wrapped in its dreamy cloud,
Toil with the toiling crowd;
This be thy pride!
Art thou not one of them,
Son of the son of them,
Whom dar'st thou shun of them,
Scorn or deride?

World and the care of it,
Falsehood and flare of it,—
All the despair of it
Cease to bemoan.
Soulsoaring, wing from it,
Beg not a thing from it,
Sturdily wring from it
Bread, all thine own.

Seek thou Art's purity.
Heaven's futurity—
Blissful security!—
What is't to thee?
Strive not for wealth or fame;
Life's but a tawdry game,
Fate of a deathless name,
Who can foresee?

Learn thou to see thyself,
Care but to be thyself,
Battling to free thyself
From earthly wrong;
Must thou partake of it,
Then for the sake of it—
Lest thy heart break of it—
Sing thou thy song.

FORGIVENESS.

Where, o'er the shadows and the gloom,
The lofty peaks majestic loom,
Where, down the everlasting mountains
Clear waters dash from snowy fountains—
O'er cloudless heights, the eternal stars
Smile brighter on man's prison bars;
Where, in that Heaven-encircled eyrie
Of pure serenity, the fiery,
Torn soul to peace may be renewed;—
In yon aerial solitude,
Where man is done and God begins,
There is forgiveness for our sins!

EPILOGUE.

Thus sang the bard, doomed to that theme's perpetual repetition.—
The song had ceased, the minstrel vanished quite, yet far and nigh
All through the dreamful night, like sacred murmurings of contrition,
A mystic, myriadvoicèd chorus echoed from on High:—

Oh, mortal man, forever striving and forever erring—
Ne'er shall thy willful pride the balm of consolation win,
Beneath thy highest crouches still the demon, soul-ensnaring
And in thy best, thy very noblest, lurks the germ of Sin.

Not by the goodness of thine upright heart, by righteous living,
Seek, Oh, vain creature of a day, to escape the chastening rod;
Hope not by Charity, not by the paths of generous giving,
Thy quaking spirit may at last behold the Living God.

Hope not at all, nor fashion out of thine own vague contriving
A Heaven, where piteous fear may crave perennial reward;
Doomed on earth's crumbling crust to crawl, forever struggling, striving,
Hope not through Hope to view the awful Visage of thy Lord.

Sweet solace these! Yet not by deed, nor hope, nor Faith's profession
Art thou the far sublimity of the Unknown to know.
Nay, wretched mortal, through the thorny paths of thy transgression,
Through Sin's abasement and thine utter helplessness of Woe,

In night profound, with thine own tortured soul communing lonely,
Shalt thou attain those starry heights, ethereal and serene;
Discern shalt thou from Misery's abysms, and from these only,
The marvelous beneficence of Him, the Great Unseen!

Oh, blessed sinner, hast thou seen? Henceforth naught can appall thee,
All undismayed, thy soul invites the inevitable doom;
On all thy ways thy cheerful heart, whatever may befall thee,
Awaits the welcome summons that shall call thee to the tomb.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS

THE GREAT SALT LAKE.

From o'er the distant, snowclad mountain peaks,
The sudden dawn breaks on thy vast expanse;—
It wakes thee not from out thy mystic trance
Of slumbering ages. No memento speaks
Of ancient peoples, long since gone before,
To stir within the human heart anew
Immortal hope. On all thy lonely shore
No timestained footprint greets the wanderer's view,—
No trace of deeds, no history;—
Grim silence here, and mystery!

Above thy leaden bosom mounts on high
The noonday sun, as with a vengeance fierce
The callous secrets of thy heart to pierce,
Or scorch them from thy plains of alkali,
Where night all dewless falls on barren wastes.—

Mysterious Spirit of the Great Salt Lake!
Before thee none hath bent, his thirst to slake
In thy forbidding surge,—no creature tastes
Life's sweets upon thy brackish borders bare;
Beneath thy dense, inhospitable tide,
No living thing can live.

Hark! Far and wide,
There is no sound upon the evening air,
Though long the sun has sadly sunk to rest
Among the gorgeous splendours of the West;—
Nor, since the dawn of morning, was there heard
A single tuneful note of beast or bird.

What churlish Demon art thou, that abhors
The sound of all God's creatures all the day,
And when soft, soothing night unfolds its doors,
Wouldst still in cruel silence sit, Oh, say?—
Fell spirit of Eternal Doom,
There is no echo in this gloom!—

Across the rank and salty marge, there blows
The gentle breeze of balmy night. But not
With whisperings, as where the pine tree grows,
Nay,—scarcely felt, as of joys long forgot,—
A faint, far sense of loneliness and ache;
It ruffles not the bosom of the Lake.

And on the island crags and on the brush,
There lies the stillness of an awful hush;
And o'er the murky waters broods
The Spirit of vast solitudes.

REFORM.

Prometheus burst his chains in sacred rage,
Fired to that deed by pity for mankind,
And, to the wrath of proud Olympus blind,
Began at dawn men's sorrows to assuage.

He banished serfdom's blot from history's page;
The incubus of toil that weighed on man,
Into oblivion, with high-ordered plan,—
Youths' rash injustice, sordid fears of age,
War's fierce contention,man's mean pride, he swept.
From more than godlike labors of a god,
He sank exhausted. When again he trod
At morn the mountain heights, the Titan wept.
Chaos spread through the vale its hideous thrall;—
Greed and Ingratitude had ruined all.

PLEASANT AVENUE.

I love to walk on Pleasant Avenue,
Alone, on mellow summer afternoons;
Mayhap, some bird its tender note attunes
Unto the stillness, but the sounds are few

That flutter here subdued upon the breeze.
  Dim, sober mansions, halfway up the hill,
Hide in dense foliage; cool, broad, shadows fill
  The silent path beneath lowbending trees,
While in the distance, undulating, green,
  The Mississippi bluffs, farstretching, greet
In soft serenity the grateful view,
  Across the lowly settlements between.—
Ah, could all paths be simple thus, and sweet
  As thine, thou placid Pleasant Avenue!

THE TEACHER'S LAMENT.

And one, his soul with bitterness distraught,
  Did chide the immortal gods, blaspheming loud.
His garb was mean, his spirit—Ah, so proud!
  Of that lorn band was he who vainly sought
To lift men's minds to loftier flight,—he taught.

"Ye gods above, Oh make them less perverse,
  These mortals, unto song so deaf; so blind
To beauty, lest our striving come to naught!"

From out a cloud Minerva rose to view:—
  "Dejected wight, spare us thy puny curse!
Give thou thy best unto the chosen few,—
  The rest leave to the gods.—
                Poor humankind,
By vanities and trivial cares enchained,
  Seeks but to be amused and entertained."

A SONG OF ATTICA.

Oh, whither are ye flown, ye happy days
  Whose memory echoes still throughout the ages,
Ye sunny morns, when the applauded lays
  Of poets, and the wisdom of the sages
Beneath the great Palaestra's dome arose,
  Resounding through the marble porticoes!
Oh, whither are ye fled, ye ancient days
  Of Hellas, full of grandeur and repose!

Ye sound no more, ye mighty hymns of praise
  To great Olympian Jove, that at the close
Of day, sung by the many-voicèd choir,
  Elysium to blissful audience woke;
When with loud chauntings, wafted high and higher,
  The whiterobed chorus of the Vestals broke
The solemn stillness of the Parthenon!—
  Ah, ye are gone,—forever are ye gone!

Phœbus his course has run,
Shadows fade one by one;—
Slowly the summer sun,
  Hiding his crest,
Gilding the azure skies,
In the blue waters dies —
Where far Atlantis lies,
  Sinking to rest.

Where rippling fountains play,
Brave youths and maidens stray;
Evermore gather they,
  Gracious to see.
Heark'ning the tender tale,
While through the scented vale
Whispers the nightingale—
  Love's ecstasy!

All through the dells along
Fairies and dryads throng,
Sound the perennial song:—
"Beauty and Youth!"
And from the gods above
Hums, through the sacred grove,
Attica's hymn of Love,
Freedom and Truth!

Moonlight, that softly glows,
Zephyr, that gently blows
Flush of the red, red rose,—
Venus, are thine!
All earth shall sing to thee,
Garlands shall bring to thee,
Lovingly cling to thee,—
Goddess divine!

Oh, whither are ye fled, ye blissful hours
That long ago bloomed fair on Hellas' strand;
When rare fantastic shapes through perfumed bowers
Unceasing sped! Ah, vanished past recall,
Ye days of Wisdom and of Love, when all
That life bestowed was beautiful and grand!

Where now is heard the martial strain
When argosies from o'er the main,
With heroes cheering round the mast,
Returned from Asia's fields of glory
And, sweeping round the promontory,
In fair Piraeus anchor cast!

Where now is thy triumphal throng
Of laureled victors, famed in song;—
The deeds that fired thy Epic Muse!
The multitudes that greeted loudly
The gorgeous pageants, moving proudly
Along thy templed avenues!

Where now the dirge that then did mourn
The slain, who on their shields were borne,
In triumph to a hero's rest,
While through the gloom, glad paeans singing,
The warrior's soul its flight went winging
Toward the Islands of the Blest!

Ye are no more, ye glorious days of old,
Ye golden days of Attica, the queenly,—
Of Attica, the beautiful and bold
That, o'er barbaric chaos throned serenely,
Long ages all this gracious beauty bore!
Ye will return no more—Ah, nevermore!

HYMN.

Alas, the dreams that youthful fancy wrought,
Alas, the bitter pang of after years,—
The plans of goodness that have come to naught,
The vistas of the future, dimmed with tears!—
When joy is dead and hope blooms but to die,
Be thou my consolation, Lord most high!

Oh, who would dread the coming of the hour
That bids us part from earth and all its woes;
Vain emptiness of wealth and pomp and power,
The blight of care and joy's illusive throes,
And all of hot ambition's restless lure?—
Who, who would Nature's burden still endure?

Great Ruler of the spheres, Omnipotent!
When it shall please Thee to release my soul—
In awe and reverence still before Thee bent—
Ope Thou the pathway to the radiant goal
And let thy glorious Image, from afar,
Call me to dwell where the eternal are!

KEATS.

His tender spirit breathed, in accents soft,
Of lovelorn melody. Full deep he quaffed
The bitter cup of longing unappeased
That, Ah—too soon his fragile frame consumed.
In ardent flights his lovesick fancy pleased
To soar, and deep-dyed roses ever bloomed
In all his song. He loved, he dreamed, he sighed,—
And thus our gifted Adonæis died.

WEDDING SERENADE.

Sing to the bridegroom, sing to the bride,
Two that are one today;—
Sing to the joys of the eventide,
Hail to the happy day!
Greet them with shouts of mirth,
Knowing affection's worth,
Hoping the joys of earth—
Loving and blest,
Two hearts at rest.

Sorrow will come to them soon or late,
Sadness of tear and sigh;
Shadowy woofs from the loom of Fate,
Clouds in a summer sky.
Beauty and youth decay,
Passion must yield its sway;—
Sweeping the clouds away,
Peaceful and pure,
Love shall endure.

ALONE, MY LOVE, WITH THEE!

I love to walk the silent shore,
Alone, my love, with thee,
And watch the restless river haste,
Swiftfooted, to the sea.

Oh, would that I could ever drift
Where naught but waters moan,
Upon its gentle bosom borne
With thee, my love, alone!

Oh, that we two could float afar
To some fair southern isle,
Where Pan in all his glory reigns
And hamadryads smile!

All hidden from the ken of man
In that far southern sea,
How sweet to cull the Lotosfruit—
Alone, my love, with thee!

SERENADE.

In the shadow of thy portal,
Swayed by hope and fear,
See, thou sweet, enchanting mortal,
See thy cavalier!

Silvery the moonbeams glisten
Through the sighing trees,—
Come, Oh come, and list—Oh listen
To the plaintive breeze!

See the murmuring brooklet shimmer,
Bathed in floods of light,
See the twinkling stars that glimmer
Through the silent night.

Art thou timid, art thou fearful?—
Tell me, love, Oh tell!
Night, with dewy breezes tearful,
Keeps her secrets well;

And the trees, in silence sombre,
Shade the mossy bowers,
Where nor moon, nor stars can number
Joy's swiftfleeting hours.

And the brooklet ever hurries,
Sees not you nor me;
What it hears, ere dawn it buries
In the distant sea.

Linger not then, love, come haste thee.
Morning's crimson blush
Soon shall part us;—come, and taste thee
Sweets untold,—hush—hush!

LOVE'S COYNESS.

Thou lov'st me, aye?—
I read it in that stifled sigh;—
  Then why dost say me nay?
Oh, cease to pine,
Lay thy warm cheek on mine,
  And I will charm thy cares away.

Nay,—do not weep!
Who would such lovefull glances steep
  In floods of bitter tears?
Come! Hide thy face
Upon my breast;—in fond embrace
  I'll banish all thy fears.

And must thou reason,
In Love's full-flooded season
  Of Springtide joys and blisses?
Thy sweet mouth pouts;—
Lend me awhile thy doubts
  And I will smother them in kisses.

WITH A ROSE.

Turn not with scornful smile away,
  In proud disdain.
  Look once again
  And take the gift. Though small
  It seem, yet among all
The flowers that bloom this day
  On hill or heath,
  There's none like unto this.

Do thou but breathe
  Upon it and 't will tell,
In passionate accents that could pale
The sunset glow, a secret tale
  Of tender meetings and of fond farewell.
Oh, wouldst thou kiss
  Its blushing brow, it would reveal
  All that its crimson pulses feel
Of summer bliss.—

Then do not spurn the loving token
Of thoughts that must remain unspoken,—
  Of fervent longing's mute appeal!

Ah—blessed lot!—
  A day upon thy bosom sweet
  To rest; then, withered at thy feet,
To pass away,—forgot!

APOLOGY

Oh, chide me not—Oh, chide me not!
  And is thy heart so cold,
And wilt thou ever on me frown
With eye severe? I gladly own
  Thy beauty made me bold.
Condemn the ardor of my glance
And passion's wild exuberance;
Let lovelorn slavery be my lot,—
But chide me not—but chide me not!

Oh, chide me not—Oh, chide me not!
  Why wilt thou ever seek
To force those pretty lips to pout,—
Why suffer baneful scorn to flout
  The bloom upon thy cheek?

Oh, let me fold thee in my arms,
That I may feel the thousand charms
That in thy heaving bosom hide;—
Then mayst thou chide,—then mayst thou chide!

ROSES.

Red and white and variegated
  In their hues, the roses bloom,
Odorless or perfumesated;
  In the crimsontinted gloom
Of Evening,—on the bosom of the morn,
  With fresh dewdrops mated.
But more soothing far than any,
Fairest fair of all the many
In the lap of verdure born
Were the Rose without a thorn!

THE SWIMMER.

Joyous and lithe,
Beautiful, blithe,
  As she floats on the wave, is she;
And the rise and the fall
Of her form, enthrall
  The bright foamcrested sea!

Where the billows dash,
Her white arms flash
  With a reckless, dizzy glee,
And her dark eyes gaze
With a luring blaze,
  That seems to beckon thee.

Knowst thou the lay—
So sad, so gay;
The ancient melody
Of the soft sea air,—
Of the mermaid's snare,
And the breakers by the sea?

ON TO THE FRAY!

The young knight of Arnè was blithe and gay
As out of the castle he galloped away,
On the balmy morn of a summer day,
To the battlefield.
When he came where the lovely maidens dwell,
In the cloistered turret's lofty cell,
A tear from an open casement fell
On his shimmering shield.

But he saw it not, as he rode along
At the head of the brave and stately throng,
And a measured tramp with the battle song
The chargers kept:—

"We sweep on the foe like the mountain flood,
Till our arms shall reek in his crimson blood!"
A maid at the open casement stood,
And sighed and wept.

MINSTREL LOVE.

A tuneful voice came from the prison ringing,
Borne forth on pinions of heroic melody,
In endless song, as if it would go winging
Its flight on—on, in all Eternity,—

On—on, nor ever would be still:
"My life was song and Death shall find me singing!—
The scaffold looms upon the hill.

"Long have I waited for this day of pleasure.
Unto your monarch my last message bring;
Tell him a king may buy a queenly treasure
But minstrel love is mightier than a king,
And true hearts' love will have its will;—
Old monarchs are not fit for Love's sweet leisure."
The scaffold looms upon the hill.

"Turn them away, with cross and benediction,
The friars that come in sable gaberdine.
Tell them, proud hearts will love without restriction,
And that the doom of minstrel and of queen
With joy, but not with dread, can fill
Two hearts that glory in Love's fond conviction."
The scaffold looms upon the hill.

"Yea, tell the holy monks we do believe them—
That after death the spirit upward flies.
Heaven's joys!—Who could more fervently conceive them
Than lovers at the gates of Paradise,
Where angels, who have felt the thrill
Of earthborn love, are lingering to receive them?"
The scaffold looms upon the hill.

"Go, tell your lord I loved her, queen supernal
Of all that gracious womanhood could be;—
My queen! — And would proclaim it, though the infernal
Soul tortures of the damned were his decree.
Come, Death!—Our love thou canst not kill.—
Our souls shall meet tonight in the Eternal."—
The scaffold looms upon the hill.

A woman's corpse was borne, when night was heavy,
By muffled minions to the royal tomb.—
Ere dawn the graybeard king, of wars and levy
Discoursing with his knights, sat in the gloom
Of the great, dim, ancestral hall,—
And o'er the scaffold's prey there screeched a bevy
Of carrion kites high carnival.

LA DEMIEVIERGE.

Ah, maiden fair,
Thou, with the golden hair
Where once throned virgin radiance!
Thou, with that furtive boldness in thine eyes
Where erstwhile shone deep wistful innocence,
Clear as the lambent azure of the skies!

Too late! In vain to cry beware,
For thou hast forfeited the grand surprise—
Hast made a barren compromise
With Conscience—hast forestalled
The sacred ecstasy,
That on thy bitter sense so soon has palled!
All turned to ashes now and dross,
The precious magic and the mystery.

The joy that should be clear, profound and sainted,
Thou hast with curious calculation tainted
And Love, whose fairy wings their dainty gloss,
Their priceless bloom, before the baneful blight,
Borne on the breath of cunning sophistry,
Have shed,—Love has forsaken thee!

Ah, Love is fled;—
Sweet Love has taken flight!
Didst hear his parting moan?—Sweet Love is dead
And thou hast murdered him. Stillborn,
His tender spirit vanished in affright
And will return no more. Yet, all forlorn,
His pallid ghost shall, through the restless night
In tantalizing visions, haunt thy bed
And mock thee on the morn.

What boots thy modesty demure,
But to delude thyself with vain hypocrisy—
Thou in defilement pure,
In purity defiled!

Love will return no more to thee
Though, by new sophistries beguiled,
Thy heart—half wanton half in virgin pride—
Seek still to woo him back unto thy side.

The bloom from off the rose,
The gorgeous glamour of the Eventide
And all the delicate, delicious throes
That in the moonlit, starrystudded night
Fresh maidenlonging only knows,—
These hast thou idly banished from thy sight
And thou shalt know them nevermore.
Thine empty heart shall sicken to the core,
And angels weep to see thy plight.

Far better thou hadst yielded up thine all
In reckless passion, though unworthily,
To one whom thou couldst love with all thy soul.
Aye, better far, to dandle on thy knee
A bastard babe to soothe thee in thy fall,
In Love's abandon generously begot—

A gleam of consolation in thy dole—
  Than thus to seem what thou art not,
Than thus to play the virgin role
  Of Innocence, still hiding what thou art.

Nor maid, nor mistress, thou, somewhat too good
  For noble scorn, and to be wooed—
Too low;—of Heaven and thine own heart
  A thing despisèd, and apart!

THE PURE ITALIAN METHOD.

(A SATIRE.)

There is no easier occupation
  Than teaching others how to sing,
All other work is but vexation;—
  "Voice Culture" is *the thing*!

Get a piano (you may hire it
  Of any music-dealing man)
And furniture—you may acquire it
  On the instalment plan.

A cardboard sign, "Signor Fan-Tutti,"
  (In colors of the brightest hue)
You paste upon your door with putty,—
  Or mucilage will do.

Set up some plaster bust—say Mozart's—
  Though classics be beyond your ken;
You know how fashion bows to those arts
  It knows least of—so then!

Your flowing hair, with curling irons
(All artists should have flowing hair),
Twist out of shape, and (like Lord Byron's)
A rolling collar wear.

With best of cloth and cut, completely
Your scanty wardrobe re-enforce!
A man like you must dress up neatly
And rich—"on tick," of course.

Now groom yourself, put your best coat on,
And seek some fashionable church,
Sing something sacred they all dote on;—
They're always in the lurch

In church-choirs, for some cause or other.
A signor's welcome any way,
But they would welcome any brother
Who sings and asks no pay.

Sing as you please, but sing with volume,
Make all the noise that you can make
Till up and down the spinal column
They feel the creeps,—'twill take!

Soon comes the social invitation—
"Dear Signor, will you, such a day
Sing for our special delectation?"—
Accept without delay.

The old Italian repertory
Will do, if sung with *tour de force,*
Of love and moonshine, the old story
Repeat without remorse.

Soon you will be the chief attraction
In all the town:—the sight of sights;

Swell lunatics will form a faction
Known as "Fan-Tutti-ites."

Now at your creditors' appearance
Don't worry, friend, about the funds;
Remember, nerve and perseverance
Are chloroform to duns.

With all distinction and politeness
Receive them in your studio;
Tell them with bows and grave contriteness
That Count Foldudio,

Your uncle, Lord of Calabresi,
Sends your remittance by the moon.
He's short this month but then, he says he
Will send the money soon.

Or tell them Prince di Pimpernellos,
Sole owner of the Isle Corfu,
Is your god-father, and no fellow's
As thick with him as you.

Thus throw persuasion's net around them
And keep it up from day to day.
Style and big names will soon confound them,
Confound them any way!

See how the tide of female fashion
The handsome signor overruns!
Italian song's so full of passion!—
So're they— the married ones.

Let them come tripping to your studio
And sing awhile—*do, re, mi, fa,*
Repeat the tale about Foldudio,—
Teach them an *Aria.*

You needn't know a word of English,
  May mix up V with W,
One vowel from t'other scarce distinguish,—
  Don't let that trouble you.

For singing, d—n the Anglo-Saxon,
  All but Italian d—n as well,
And point to Chaucer'nd Andrew Jackson
  Who couldn't even spell.

A voice that's just a little plastic,
  A little bit of *do, re, mi.*
Good looks, a conscience that's elastic,—
  That's all one needs,—you see?

The rest will follow by induction;
  Go right ahead, you're sure to win.
All else is learned without instruction,—
  Just rake the shekels in!

This is the first and last injunction:
  Don't fail to mark the lessons down!
To charge them high without compunction,
  Brings fortune and renown.

An easy mind good for the health is,—
  Your property make portable
Therefore, and see that all your wealth is
  With ease resortable.

And keep the racket up till when you
  Of these good folks may disapprove,—
Or they of you, signor,—and then you
  Pack up some night and move.

TRANSLATIONS OF SONG TEXTS FROM THE GERMAN.

MAIENNACHT.

From the German of Muth.

Wake with array
  Of moon and magic,
Thou night of May!
  The torrents gush with mystic flow,
The hilltops glitter with light aglow,
  And, like some fay,
Glides through the vale
  The night of May.

And mellow are
  Postillion tones
That sound afar,
  Of rosy hours a lover's lay
They sing to thee, Oh balmy May.
  And soft there start
On budding wings
  Within the heart,
May-blossomings.

Thy splendour bright,
  Oh, let me view,
Thou gorgeous night!
  Send once again, Oh Nightingale,
Heart-echoes thrilling through the vale.
  I dream again
Forgotten joy, forgotten pain,
  On fairy wing
Oh, come, thou wondrous night of Spring;
  My drooping eyelids softly close,
And cradle me in thy repose.—
  Keep watch till day,
Thou ever splendid night of May!

SCHOEN ROHTRAUT.
(MOERIKE.)

Oh, how is King Ringang's daughter hight?
Rohtraut, fair Rohtraut.
And what doth she the livelong day—
For she cannot sew, aye, nor spin alway?
Goes fishing and hunting.
Oh, that I were a hunter now—
Fishing and hunting were sport, I trow!
Be silent, my heart, be still.

Erelong the lad in hunter's garb,—
Rohtraut, fair Rohtraut,—
In Ringang's royal service bode,
And on a handsome steed he rode
With Rohtraut a-hunting,
Oh, that I were a prince said he;
Rohtraut, fair Rohtraut, my love should be.
Be silent, my heart, be still.

And once they rested beneath an oak.
Then laughed fair Rohtraut,—
"Why gaze on me with lovelorn stare?
Come kiss me, kiss me, if you dare!"
Ah, the poor lad started!
Yet thinks, I may if I but list,
And straightway fair Rohtraut's lips he kissed.—
Be silent, my heart, be still.

Anon in silence home they ride.—
Rohtraut, fair Rohtraut.—
Then beat his heart exultingly,
And if thou empress come to be,
N'er shall it rue me.
Ye thousand leaves that the breezes sway,
Ye know I've kissed her lips today!—
Be silent, my heart, be still.

DER TOD UND DAS MAEDCHEN.

From the German of Claudius.

Pass by me, thou fierce Spirit—
Hence, ghastly skeleton!
I am so young—Ah, leave me;
Oh, touch me not,—begone!

Give, tender child, thy hand—I am thy friend;
Nor fierce am I, nor would alarm thee;
Be of good cheer—clasped in my arms
In gentle sleep, naught e'er shall harm thee!

"DER WANDERER."

From the German of Schmidt von Luebeck

I come o'er hills and blooming leas,
Through misty vales, o'er foaming seas—
I wander on, am seldom gay—
My heart still questions, "where away?"
Methinks the sunlight here is cold,
The blossoms faded,—life is old,—
Their speech but sound; their gaze a stare—
I am a stranger everywhere!

Belovèd goal, where art thou flown?
Sought still, and felt, but never known!
The land where hope dispels life's gloom,
Where flowery gardens ever bloom;
Where friends stand on the peaceful shore
And the departed rise once more!
The land that speaks my native tongue.
Oh land, where art thou?

I wander on, am seldom gay—
My heart still questions, "where away?"
In ghostly tones respond the Fates:
"Where thou art not—there Fortune waits."

WANDERSCHAFT.

(W. MUELLER.)

To wander is the miller's joy;—
A sorry miller sure were he
Who never cared the world to see,
And wander.

The water runs along the race,
It gurgles with a merry chime
And keeps a-wandering all the time,
The water.

The millwheels turn around and 'round,
Around and 'round the livelong day;—
It never makes them tired, they say—
The millwheels.

The pebbles e'en, they try their best,
Vie with the water in the race
And strive to spin a swifter pace--
The pebbles.

To wander, wander, Oh,—the joy!—
So master dear and dame, goodbye,
God bless you both! And off am I
To wander.

BLUT UND EISEN.

(H. GRIEBEN.)

Break forth then, thunderbolts of war!
Let Blood and Iron settle,
  With main and might,
  Who's in the right,
And test our German mettle.

Press on, press on in storm and stress,—
Each man unto his station.
  With war alarms—
  To arms—to arms!
Thou solid German nation.

Oft have we sung, in merry strain,
"Die Wacht am Rhein" together;
  Now, hand in hand,
  For Fatherland
Our blood shall drench the heather.

The God who made the iron to grow
Would have no slaves about him;
  Then forth we go
  To meet the foe,
With fire and sword to rout him!

So help us God's own mighty power
In throes of bloody battle!
  We will not quake,
  When Heaven shall shake
With cannons' thundrous rattle!

ICH WAND'RE NICHT.

Why should I wander, wherefore
With others forth to roam,
With those I do not care for,
While sweetheart stays at home?
They seek out hill and hollow
And sing of mount and mere,
But then, why should I follow?
It is so lovely here!

They tell of marvels growing
Elsewhere, both great and small;
Of grapes in sunset glowing—
I do believe it all.
But wine from distant presses,
Does it not reach us here?
Where I, 'mid soft caresses,
May quaff it with my dear.

The great world and its splendour
I do not care to see;
Her dear eyes, blue and tender,
Are Heaven itself to me,
And more than all the pleasure
Of spring, her smile can give.
Oh, thou my only treasure,
Oh, where else would I live!

ICH HATTE EINST EIN SCHOENES VATERLAND.

Once was I happy in my native home,
The oak there reared its lofty head,
The violets lowly grew;—
It was a dream.

And when in time to foreign lands I came,
I found a maiden, beautiful,
Her eyes with Love aglow:—
It was a dream.

She kissed me and in my own native tongue—
You'd scarce believe how dear to hear—
She spoke: "I love but thee!"—
It was a dream.

LIED.

(OTTO TIEHSEN.)

Ah, to the soul that a memory fills,
Earth is a garden fair;
Well for the heart that true love thrills,
Blooming forever there!
The bird that can naught but twitter and fly
And float through the sunny day,—
Had it not Love, how could it sigh
In song its tender lay?

And had not the flower the sun's warm light,
How could it gaily blow?
Were not my heart with Love made bright,
Where were its joyful glow?
And how could it ever know heartease
If not by tears bedewed?—
Then let me o'er fond memories
In silent sadness brood!

ICH LIEBE DICH!

Thou, all my thought,
My very soul's existence;

Thou, all my hope—
My heart's first ecstasy!
Sole earthly call
To which my fond heart listens,—
I love but thee,
I love but thee—
But thee, in life
And in Eternity!

THE ASRA.

(HEINE.)

In the eventide the Sultan's daughter,
She of wondrous beauty,
Daily came unto the fountain,
Where the cool, white waters ripple.
In the eventide, the young slave
Daily stood beside the fountain
Where the cool, white waters ripple.—
Daily grew he pale and paler.

Once at evening strode the princess
T'ward the slave, with hasty question:
"What thy name is, thou shalt tell me,
And from whence thou,—who thy people!"

And the young slave spake:
My name is Mahomet—
I am of Yemen,
And my tribe is that of Asra—
They who perish when they love.

THE PAGE.

(HEINE.)

There was a grim old monarch,—
  His gray head bowed by time and tide;
Alack, the poor old monarch!—
  He took him a fair young bride.

A page there was, full handsome.
  Blond were his locks, gay was his mien;—
The silken train, he bore it
  Behind the lovely queen.

Knowst thou the ancient story—
  The tale so sweet, so sad to tell?
Both he and she must perish;—
  Alas, they loved far too well!

ICH GROLLE NICHT.

(HEINE.)

I do not chide,
Though break my heart in pride.
Loved one, forever lost,—
  I do not chide.

Though dazzling thou,
With brilliant gems bedight,
In thy heart's gloom
There falls no gleam of light,—
  Full well I know.

I do not chide,
Though break my heart in pride —

In dreams again I found thee,
Saw in thy soul the hopeless night that bound thee,—
I saw the serpent at thy bosom gnaw;
Thy pain my love, thy misery I saw.—
I do not chide.

TO MUSIC.
(SCHOBER.)

Oh, gracious Art, in dismal hours how often
Hast thou, when life was bound in toil and tears,
With balm of Love my bosom deigned to soften—
Hast raised my drooping soul to higher spheres!

Ofttimes a sigh that from thy harp hath drifted,
A faint and holy chord of sweet attune,
To bliss of happier days my heart hath lifted,—
Thou gracious Art, I thank thee for the boon!

TO MELANCHOLY.
(LENAU.)

Melancholy, dear attendant,
Pensively lingerest thou near;
Be my bright star in the ascendant,
Or obscurèd,—still thou 'rt here!

Oft thou lead'st where crags are rifted,
Where the eagle lonely soars
Where the pinetops high are lifted
And the mountain torrent roars.

Then I hear my lost ones speaking
Through faint mists of memory,
And, thy gentle bosom seeking,
Steep mine aching heart in thee.

BITTE.
(LENAU.)

Eyes of dark and tender lustre,
  Orbs that hold my spirit bound—
Beam upon me gravely, gently,
  Dreamy depths of night profound!

From my sight, in sable magic,
  Veil this world with darkness o'er,
So ye hover still above me—
  Ye alone,—forevermore!

WIR SIND DES HERRN.
(SPITTA.)

We are the Lord's, in life and death, forever,
  We are the Lord's, who died that we might live.
We are the Lord's—no power from Him shall sever,
  We are the Lord's, who for us all did give.

We are the Lord's, let us in our behaviour
  Acknowledge Him, in heart and deeds and words.
He lived for us, for us he died,—our Saviour!
  Then may we truly say, we are the Lord's.

We are the Lord's in danger and in sorrow,
  That gleam of hope his boundless grace records;
It beams through darkness like the dawning morrow,—
  That everblessèd word,—we are the Lord's!

We are the Lord's; our Lord will not forsake us
  When yawns the grave and earth no help affords.
Even in death no evil shall o'ertake us,
  For it is ever true,—we are the Lord's!

THE MAID OF TULLN.

THE MAID OF TULLN.

It was upon a warm midsummer morn;
  The Danube swiftly sped upon its way.
A tourist throng from near and far away—
  A motley company—sped with it, borne
Upon the great sidewheeler's ample decks,
  A panting, eager, restless, guidebook crowd.
They raised their parasols and craned their necks,
  While some hired cicerone bawled aloud
The things noteworthy on the river banks,
  Whereat they chattered all among themselves,
By twos and fours and nines and tens and twelves—
  A very Babel of confusèd tongues—
You scarce could hear the guide; and Oh, what lungs
  That cicerone had!
"Nay,'' said I, "thanks!''
And seek below a cool, secluded seat—
  Distraction's refuge and secure retreat—
Behind the starboard paddlebox, and gaze
  Enraptured on the blooming, vineclad hills,
The tinted houses and meandering rills
  That sparkle faintly through the morning haze.
And ever and anon there rises,
  To greet the eye with glad surprises,
A castle on some distant eminence.
  And, borne away on fancy's pinions,
I dream of lords and lordly minions,
  Who, in the fierce old feudal days,
Charged up yon rugged hillside path
  With eyes of flame and sword of wrath,
And, through the hidden forest maze
  On some bold, chivalrous pretense,
Bore off the luckless maiden hence,
  Out of vile bondage in the lofty tower,
To some much grander castle down the stream;—
  For it was ever thus: power against power!

And thus I sit in peace, and thus I dream,
  And blink in indolent contentment at the view
Of this fair, fleeting panorama of the shore,
  Rid of that cursèd cicerone and his crew.

It seems 'twere well to live thus evermore,—
  In silent contemplation thus to speed
Forever down the tide—'twere rest indeed!—
  No yesterday, today—no whence nor when,—

"*Ach, guter Herr, ja—Sie entschuldigen?*"—
  A smiling dowager accosts me thus,
A comfortable soul, her face all beaming
  With unction and with perspiration streaming,
Her figure ample as an omnibus;
  A matron florid, fat and fifty-four.
And just behind her, gazing at the shore,
  A pensive maiden stands, a graceful child,
Like to the damsel of my dream of day,
  With two broad chestnut plaids down to her hips,
Her cheek aflush, great eyes of deepest blue,
  A gently heaving bosom, two red lips,
So sweetly parted, as her longing eyes
  Rest on the hazy castle far away.

In Austria I would do as Austrians do,
  So I get up and say, "*Gnae' Frau, bitt' schoen,*"
And lift my hat; Whereon with ponderous sighs,
  Like some leviathan in pain,
Her monstrous sort of picnic hamper
  The matron heaves up on the seat,
Kerthwack! And damp and damper
  Her kerchief grows, as still it sops
The moisture from her countenance;—
  "*Ach, ist das heiss!*" and down she flops,
While still complaining of the heat,
  Exhausted at my side, kerflump!

It shivers all my fairy trance,
  My blissful dream of far romance,
And makes the heavy hamper jump
  A foot or two; and I am glad
That benches here are what they are,
  For strength and durability.
And now she starts to talk like mad
  Of blood relations, near and far,
Of houses, gardens, vineyards three,
  And money in the funds, "you see,"
Of birth and marriage and of death—
  A family history in a breath.

"That child? Oh, no, *das ist nicht mein;*
  That girl is Minchen; she's my ward,
But not my child, *ach nein, ach nein,*
  She comes to work for bed and board;
I brought her down from Linz, you see,"
  And leans to whisper in my ear:
"She comes from Coblenz on the Rhine;
  Das Minchen ist ein Findelkind."

Lone child of Love, how pensively,
  Her coarse skirt fluttering in the wind,
She looks across the rushing river!
  And I can see her full lips quiver,
And in her eye I see a tear.

The stream rolls on, and on we ride,
  The matron's tongue speeds on apace;
No power can stem that gushing tide,
  No stopper cork that ceaseless flow,
That pours like water through a sieve.

"We go to Tulln; that's where we live,"
  And I can read it in her face,
Now she will ask me where I go,—

"Und Sie, mein Herr, wo geh'n Sie hin?"
"I," said I, "madam—*Ich?—nach Wien.!"*
"So far as that!" says she, "Ah, then,—
Sie kommen dann wohl von Berlin?"
I shake my head,—"Not so, good dame.!"
'Tis plain that she will guess again,
A pleasure it would be a shame
To rob her of.—"*Ach, dann vielleich'*
Aus Solmen, Olmen, Unkenteich?"—
And names a dozen towns or more
In this fair land of Austria.

And Minchen still looks at the shore
And drops her tears into the stream.

"No," said I, "madam, further still,—
Ich komme noch viel weiter her."
"*Noch weiter?*" says she, "*So?—Ach ja,*
Von Bayern dann, von Dettelbach?"—
"I come from far across the sea,"
Said I. "*Was,—weit von ueberm Meer!*
Ach, Joseph und Maria, ach,
Da sind Sie aus Amerika!"
And claps her hands in childish glee,
"*Mein August Sohn der ist ja da;*
Komm', Minchen, komm' mal her geschwind,—
Was stehst du da, was gaffst du da?—
Is des e' sonderbares Kind.—
Der Herr kommt aus Amerika;"
And Minchen comes and makes a "*Knix,*"—
An oldtime courtsey,—Ah, so sweet!
And looks down shyly at her feet.—
"*Was stehst du da, und guckst nach nix?"*

I take the maiden's hand in mine:
"Sweet maid from Coblenz on the Rhine,
Come sit ye down beside o' me!"

And that fat woman rattles on
With wondrous volubility,
I fear she'll talk me quite to death;—
A dozen questions in a breath,
As if she had her soul in pawn
To all the powers of purgatory,
And needs must talk it into glory,—
And never pauses for reply.
At last she ceased, and with a gasp—
A sterterous, elephantine sigh,—
She opened up the hamper clasp
And vowed that she must surely die
Of hunger, if she didn't eat,
"*Und Ach, Maria mein, der Durst!*"
And took out yards of *Wienerwurst,*
And *Schinken,* cheese and lots of things,
And laid them all down at her feet;
A monstrous ryebread, chickenwings,
Two bottles of Dalmatian wine
And several others from the Rhine,
Some strong, sweet beer in bottles, too,
Like licorice, such was its hue.
We helped her just for fear she'd burst,
For she could eat for three times two,
And, Oh Gargantua, what a thirst!

But nothing lasts for aye below;
You can't forever keep on drinking, eating,
For Time is fleet and ever fleeting,
And nothing comes but it must go.

At last the poor old creature fell to blinking
Her drowsy eyes, and said she was a-thinking,
When one has eaten one should take a rest.
And I responded, "Yes, no doubt 'twere best,—
A wholesome custom, most assuredly,"—
And trusted she'd have pleasant dreams sans number;

Whereon the dame composed herself to slumber,
And left the world to Minchen and to me.

Ah, could we comfort all that are afflicted
And right the wrongs that evermore shall be,
In what fair hues man's lot could be depicted,—
How happier far the days for you and me!
If he who left this blossom, rare and sainted,
To thrive among an unacknowledged brood,—
To bear the foundling's mark, forever tainted,
And waste youth's bloom in odious servitude;—
What would he not do now to set her free!
What misery were his,—if he could see!

She did not turn her face away,
But spoke in her mild, German way,—
So innocent, so fair;
She told me of the distant Rhine,
She placed her little hand in mine,
And kept it there.

She told me of the convent ways
And how the nun's high songs of praise
Float on the evening air;
Of avenues that gently wind
Round beds of roses, and how kind
The sisters were.
Of some fair garden on a hill,
And how your very heart would thrill
From thence, or from the dormitory,
To see the Rhine in all its glory.

But these dear memories seemed to make her sad,
And suddenly she checked her pretty story
And, lifting up her great, soft eyes to me,
She said, indeed she would be very glad
To hear about that land across the sea,

From whence I came, the land of which she'd read
When at the convent o'er some volume poring,—
The land so wide, so gloriously free,
Where there was room for all and room to spare;
Land where the noble redman's stately tread—

Here our fat dowager began a snoring,
Like to a sawmill in the open air,
And puffed and whistled most prodigiously;
All in her sleep. Whereat, of course, we smiled;
And thus, as down the Danube still we sped,
We cheerfully the afternoon beguiled,
The while the sun sank lower in the sky,—
We two, this charming *Findelkind* and I.

Talked of the Indians and the ponderous bear
And of the wolves that prowl in winter there;
Of hunters' joys and woodlands dark and dense,
Of summer nights beneath a canvas tent,—
Of soft, warm summer days of lone content,
Passed on the shore of some great, gleaming lake.

She gazed at me in lovely innocence,
And, with a saintly rapture, gently spake:
"How beautiful all this must be
In your great land across the sea,
Where summer days are all so fair,
And where the great, primaeval woods
Are full of such grand solitudes!
I wonder, *Ach, mein lieber Herr,*
Indeed, good sir, I wonder sheer
Whatever made you come out here!"

Ah, Minchen, dear, man is a strange,
Unhappy creature, and on change
Still bent is he,—
Nor e'er contented with his lot;

Still evermore where he is not,
There would he be.

And Minchen sat awhile in pensive mood,
Her dreamy gaze fixed on the sunset hues
That glowed upon the distant evening sky.
Then softly murmured she: "Oh, that one could
The soaring pinions of the eagle choose
And o'er the sea to some far country fly!
To some far distant land to wander
Beyond the burning sunset yonder,
Known unto none and no one knowing, never
To come back here across the wide, wide mere,
But near that silent lake to live forever;''—
And clasped her hands—"*Ach Gott, wie schoen das waer'!*"

"But how about the Indians, child,'' I said,
"*Die wilden Woelfe und die grimmen Baeren?*''
"Oh sir, indeed, I should not be afraid,—
"*Ach nein, mein Herr, Ach, nicht wenn Sie da waeren!*"

"Tulln, Tulln,'' the pompous purser cried.
"*Ach, Tulln!*'' the handsome maiden sighed,
"Are we already there?''
While stewards hurried to and fro,
And "Tulln'' and "Tulln,'' above, below,
Re-echoed everywhere.

"*Rueckwaerts aussteigen!*" bawled the guard,
And on the bridge the captain: "Hard,
I say, helm hard aport!''
And, what with all this sudden roaring,
Our dowager now stopped her snoring,
And woke up with a snort.

"*Adieu, und hat mich sehr gefreut,*
Man trifft doch immer nette Leut.—

Wo ist denn nur das Kind?—
Und gruessen Sie mir aber ja
Mein' August, in Amerika.—
Nun, Minchen, komm', geschwind!''

The years have come, the years have gone,
The Danube river still flows on;
And oft I see, as in a dream,
When evening shadows fall amain,
Our boat from Tulln pull out again.
I see, as we swing down the stream,
Far up a steep and narrow street,
That hamper huge in triumph borne
By some tall wight with nimble feet,
Behind whom, waddling all forlorn,
A fat old woman tries in vain
To keep the giant's sturdy pace.

And far behind adown the lane,
I see an angel maiden's face
In sadness turned toward the stream,—
A kerchief fluttering in the breeze;
And, faintly from afar, I seem
To hear a holy cloister bell
From out a grove of poplar trees,—
Farewell, sweet maid of Tulln, farewell!

ECHOES FROM THE ROCKIES.

Extracts from the literary remains of
Billy Bannock, Rocky Mountain
Prospector and Poet.

And in them days lived Bishop Lumkin
  In his brick mansion on the bench.
His head was like an old prize pumpkin,
  His great big nose, it had a wrench
From right to left and back agin,
  And when he looked at you, he glowered
From under eyebrows black as Sin.
  His ugly mouth was seamed and soured
With calculating his percents,
  His hands was like a pair o' hams,
His ears looked like big shells o' clams,
  And warts and bumps and lumps and dents,
Like hills and canyons, you could see
  Upon his physimahogany.

When he walked 'round to git his rents
  Once every month, with them two bunions
On his big feet, like Spanish onions,
  And shuffled down the street so tall,
With shoulders like a buffalo;
  Dressed all in black from top to toe
And measurin' seven foot over all,
  His heavy jaw set firm and grim,—
No wonder folks was 'fraid o' him.

He got the cash by hook or crook,
  And when he made a loan or two,
He opened up his great big book,
  To put down when the notes come due.
And Caleb Lumkin's lowest figger
  Was by the month at two per cent,
On excellent security,
  And so his bank account got bigger.
And everywhere that Caleb went
  He fetched that book with him, did he,

A-shufflin' up and down, and 'roun'
The dusty streets of Scrambletown;
And when at night the bishop climm
Up Sinai hill, with weary tread,
Some mean, sarcastic gentiles said,
He took the book to bed with him.

Besides his rents and stocks and lands,
Old Caleb had a healthy fam'ly,—
You couldn't count 'em on both hands.
There was Jemima, Jane and Em'ly,
Three gals like flagstaffs on a hill,
Sue, Sal and Nell, all big and bony
And Eben, Philemon and Bill,
Bob, Aaron, Lehi, and Moroni,
Melchisedec and lank Lamoni—
That boy he was a son of a gun,—
Joe, Nephi, Abraham and Phil,
And Brigham was the youngest one.

In them there early Mormon days,
The bishops hadn't learned to know
Napoleon, Cæsar, Cicero;
They never cared much anyways
'Bout Washingtons and Henry Clays,
But babies kept a-comin' so
That names was at a premium,
So when a fresh male squaller come,
In fam'lies where they'd used up Joe
And Jim and John, then they was liable
To baptize from the Mormon bible,
And when that stock was wellnigh spent
They'd draw upon the Testament.

Old Lumkin, he was big and tall,
His wife she was so lean and small.
With pale red hair and back all bent;
She looked so weak and frail and thin,
Jest like a piece o' porcelin.

But don't you trust them tender creatures
O' womankind that look so weak,—
Them women with the smearkase features.—
Don't count upon their bein' meek.
No—don't you fool yourselves, my boys,
I'm up on matrimonial joys;—
Them big fat women is all right;
They may rave round and scold a bit
Or make believe they've got a fit,
And sometimes, maybe, they'll show fight,—
But they're a comfortable sort.
You let on easy—jest make sport
When they flare up, and in the main
You find they'll soon come round again;
A flash o' lightnin' and some thunder,
And then comes sunshine after rain.

But that thin kind that makes you wonder
They don't kerflummix in a heap,—
The kind that don't know how to weep,
With look so dry and brokenhearted;—
Say, boys, when that there kind gits started,
All you kin do's to stand from under!

Jane Lumkin woke one Sunday mornin',—
She thought she heard a kind o' roar;
She saw the bishop on the floor,
A-prayin' like all everlastin';—
"Oh, Jane, my dear, I've had a warnin',
A warnin' from the Lord most high,"
And kept a-moanin' and a-castin'
His rollin' eyes up to the sky.
"I thank you, Oh, ye saints in Heaven!—
Last night about a half-past 'leven,
I had a vision, darling Jane,"—
He looked jest like he had a pain.—

"What did you have?" with some decision
Says Jane to him. "Dear Jane, a vision!
I saw the saints in Paradise
With these mine own unworthy eyes."

And then he talked like Sunday preachin'
Fer fifteen minutes on a stretch
And praised the Lord, and kept a-reachin'
His folded fists up to the skies,
While Jane looked on in some surprise.

Told how an angel come to fetch
Him from his bed at half-past 'leven
And took him on his back to Heaven,
And showed him sights would make you rave
Fer very joy and holy shiver,—
Jane lay there silent as the grave;
You couldn't see a muscle quiver.

Then Bishop Caleb he got brave
And started in to tell her how
The prophet, Joseph Smith, had said:
"You're only Bishop Lumkin now,
But brother dear, be not afraid
And learn to read your title clear
To glitterin' mansions in the skies,—
And mansions on the earth likewise.
Lay up below increasing store,
Fer thou shalt live fourscore and more;
The presidency of a Stake,
High Priest, Seven of the Seventies,
Th' Apostles Council at Salt Lake,
All these the Prophet Smith decrees,"—
All this fer Caleb 'fore he'd die!
And Caleb praised the Lord most high

And told how Brother Joseph told,
How that the saints was sore offenaed

That, while the bishop laid up gold
He hadn't properly attended
Unto the matrimonial end.

"Go forthwith, brother Caleb, wend
Thy way, and unto thee have sealed,
Before the fullmoon shines anew,—
Ere yet the ploughshare breaks the field,—
A Mrs. Lumkin number two.
Prosperity awaits thy seed,—
Thus is it by the Saints decreed;
Increase, therefore, and multiply!"

The bishop praised the Lord most high,
But ere he wended forth his way,
He thought it jest as well to stay
In Heaven for supper with the Saints.

Jane Lumkin she made no complaints,
But took the saintly rigmarole
All in without a single word;—
You might a' thought she hadn't heard.
She simply wended forth her way
The same as any other day,
And every time that Caleb stole,
From out the corner of his eye,
His hang-dog, glowerin' squint at her,
Jane looked at him and softly smole
A queer and saintly kind o' smile,
A smile so gentle, yet so sly,—
As sweet as honey, green as bile;—
Poor Caleb felt uneasy, fer
No matter how he'd try and try,
He couldn't seem to recollect
That he had ever seen before,
That smile upon her countenance.

L. of C.

But he was of the Mormon sect,—
A Mormon Bishop to the core,
And didn't mean that any poor,
Weak vessel should, by any chance,
Upset a bishop's privileges.
He could have sixteen wives or more,
Of various nations and all ages,
If he had money to support 'em!
He didn't have to go and court 'em,
Like them who couldn't afford but one;—
He had the money,—that's enough,—
A Bishop, yes, and with the stuff!
He'd like to see the son of a gun
Of any shriveled Mormon mother,
Could frighten him from sealin' on
Another, yes, and still another!

He waited 'bout a week or so,
Expectin' she would simmer down,
Then in the forenoon come up town
And sneaked in at the kitchen door.
Jane Lumkin was a-rollin' dough,
And when she saw him, smiled agin
Exactly as she'd smiled before.
And swung her great big rollin' pin,
All smeared around with dough and flour.

"What brings you home at this here hour?"
Says Jane, a-lookin' straight at him.
That question almost knocked him flat;—
She didn't use to talk like that!
Then he commenced to glare and glower,
And bubblin' over at the brim,
Begins to talk:—
"Rash woman, heed
The precepts by the Saints decreed!

I've come expressly fer to tell you
That that affair is settled now,
That is to let you know, as how
She will be sealed to me next week;—
To let you know, it were as well you
Bowed down before the saintly law
Your stubborn neck, obedient, meek,
In due humility and awe.
Fer if you don't, you know, to hell you
Will find your obstinacy leadin'.—
My new wife has jest come from Sweden,
A young, angelic, fair-haired thing;
As gentle as a newborn lamb,
And she can play, and she can sing.
Her presence will be as the balm,
Of Gilead to our home, d'ye hear?
She's jest arrived here with her brother—
Two converts to our holy faith:—
And she will treat you like a mother.
Now, don't you go to actin' queer!
Be humble and submissive, dear,
As you have always been.
What saith
The Lord of Hosts? Mosiah 3,
'Respect the Prophets' holy cause,'
Verse 24:—'Bow down to me,
In due obedience to the Laws.
Let not vain hopes thy heart beguile.'
Her name is Ingeborg Johanna,—
Now stop that everlastin' smile,
And praise the Lord of hosts. Hosanna!"

The bishop pulled out his bandanna,
And mopped the sweat from off his brow.

But Jane she didn't praise a bit,
Although her smile had faded now.

She pointed to a chair. "You sit
Down there," said she, "and hearken how
I had a vision, good as you,
And maybe jest one better too.—
This morning, at a half-past seven,
The angel Gabriel come from Heaven,
In answer to my urgent prayers,
And blowed upon a long, brass horn.

'Awake, thou meek and humble soul,'
Cried he, 'thou unto trouble born,
Weighed down with duties and with cares.
And all across his face there stole
A radiance, made my blood run cold.
'Thou weary mother, wan and worn
And hounded by the devil's snares,
Be bold, dear sister Jane, be bold!'"

And told him that the angel told
Her everything that Caleb said,
And if he should bring home to wed,
That Swedish blonde, called Ingeborg,
She was to knock her on the head
And git her ready fer the morgue.

"And be thou not afraid of sin,
Dear sister Jane," said Gabriel,
"But swipe her with the rollin' pin.
And if that pumpkin-headed lout,
Your bishop-husband, kicks, jest tell
Him Gabriel knows what he's about.
He gits his orders way above
Old Joseph Smith and all the Saints.
Don't let him bully you, my love;
When Caleb quotes Joe Smith, the Prophet,
You tell him he may go to Tophet.
Don't you mind Caleb's holy plaints,

Jest tell him to go up the spout;
Nev' mind his Hallelujah shout.
And ef he tries that game agin
Or comes some other scheme on you,
Why jest you take the rollin' pin,
My sufferin' Jane, and knock him out;—
Jest smite him boldly on the snout,
My gentle Jane, that's what you do."

And Gabriel, smilin' sweet, withdrew.

And all the folks who didn't know
The inside facts about this business,—
This solitary wife o' his'n, as
They couldn't make it tally no
How, thought the matter rather queer
That this rich bishop all his life,
Right in this Mormon centre here,
Had sealed to him one only wife;
While other bishops, high and low,
Sealed unto them five, six and seven
To build up Zion here below,
And some as high as ten and eleven;—
It made the people wonder so.

And Caleb lived fer years and years,
Accordin' to the Prophet's brief,
His property it grew and grew
As from the records it appears,
And he rose to be of the chief
And saintly Mormon counsellors;
Fulfilling thus, as you kin see,
The Prophet Joseph Smith's decree.

But Gabriel had his innings too,
Fer though Jane kept on doing chores

Fer her old pumpkinheaded sinner,
Yet after all she came out winner.
  By George, that woman had the grit!
She never would let Caleb worry
  Her into any dyin' fit;—
Jane she was never in no hurry
  To pass her checks in,—not a bit!
And she lived long enough to bury
  Him in the Mormon cemetery.

Old Caleb died a saintly death,
  They say, and with his latest breath
Forgive his enemies, and then
  Sailed fer his mansions in the skies.
But these things are beyond our ken.
  Perhaps he squeezed in anyway,—
Maybe he got to Paradise;—
  But then you can't most always say,—
He may have gone the other way.

SCRAMBLETOWN'S GIFT ORGAN.

The Methodist parson of Scrambletown,
He strutted up and he strutted down
The central aisle of the bran' new church,
A-workin' his arms like a pair o' flails;—
He exhorted the flock from the altar rails
And finally climbed to his pulpit perch.
And there he hollered till he was hoarse,—
He smote the cushion with all his force,
At last he shrieked as he glared aroun':—
(It was in the days of the property boom)
"Beloved brethern, who will assume
The cost of an organ fer Scrambletown;
A church pipe organ, all bran'new?

My prosperous friends, 'twill cost but a few,
A paltry five thousand dollars, or so.—
Right here sits the richest man I know,
The richest man in a booming town;—
Stand up, beloved brother Stuff!—
They say that Scrambletown is rough,
But rough or no, an angel's crown
Awaits the man who will put down
His name fer this here triflin' sum;—
Brother Stuff, the crown it waits fer you!"

Around the church there went a hum,
As they looked at Stuff in his big front pew.
And old Colonel Stuff he says," Oh yes,
I kin pay fer the orgin, I rather guess,
Ef the rest o' you all will lift the debt
On the new church buildin'. That's what,—you bet!"
And the preacher he says, "Now, God bless
You, brother Stuff! As fer the rest
The Spirit tells me I can get
From twenty of you, each five hundred.
There's none of you," the parson thundered,
"That wants to leave this house unblest,"
And worked himself into a sweat.
"Now thirty more, two fifty each!"
That man knew more than jest to preach—
And so down to the twenty-fives
He goes, and finally arrives
At ten. "The Lord, you see," he cries,
"Would not the widow's mite despise."
And then he lifts his hands to pray:—
"Oh Lord, now glorify this day!"
"Amen!" they shout, and some "Yea, yea!"

The Reverend Wesley Cushionsmiter,
He walked around with a smile much brighter
Than any smile you ever seen.

He looked so big and he talked so keen,
Like he had the world where the hair was short
And runnin' a church was jest mere sport.

Next day he wrote to the organ man;—
Four fellers come 'way from Michigan,
All loaded up with pipes o' tin.
They tore things out and they put things in,
And turned that church all upside down—
That Methodist church in Scrambletown,—
A-workin' early and workin' late.
And when the thing was got set up,
The parson passed the communion cup
Fer money to buy a memorial plate
Of silver, to tack on the organ front,—
A sort o' brotherly love donation
To Colonel Stuff by the congregation,—
(It turned out the size of a fishin' punt),
A plate inscribed with the touchin' motto:—
"Presented by our dear brother, Lott, O.
Stuff, to the Scrambletown M. E. church."

In a week or two come the big fandango—
They engaged the great Proff. L. Slambango
Smith, an organist from Salt Lake,
Who guaranteed to make things quake.

The show commenced at eight o'clock,
When the organist got up on his perch,
And the place was full up, chock a block
With the hoot-volee o' Scrambletown.
The organist he slid up and down
And made her snort with his feet and fingers,—
They called the piece a "feug by Bock."—
Then the Methodist Hallelujah singers
Feuged with the organist in cahoots,
While several young, boiled-shirt galoots

Passed 'round a reg'ler programmee,
Jest like the Variety Concert Hall—
A printed paper, where you kin see
The pieces they sing before the ball.
The ladies sold tickits and took the tin,—
The people paid fifty cents to git in.
In the middle the preacher begins to pray
And told 'em the church had come to stay.
Then the singers they all begin to shout
While some dudes they passed the hat about,
And all of us had to pay to git out.

But before we got, the Reverend gent
Brought down his fist on the Testament,
And preached on a fav'rite theme o' his'n:—
"The polygamists down in Salt Lake jail,"—
And his wrath broke forth in a screechy wail;
Every Elder, said he, ought to be in prison,
To hell with the Mormons and damn the Pope;
And told 'em flat, that their only hope
Was to git to Heaven by the Methodist way.

Now, after a year or so and a day
The organbuilder he wanted his pay.
But as by that time the boom was busted
And most o' the Methodist flock had dusted,
You couldn't collect the price of a louse;
Fer a silver dollar looked big as a house.

Then the Reverend's anger was immense
And he up and calls a conference,
And sends a notice to everyone
Of his beloved congregation.—
We boys all went to see the fun.—
Jest sizzlin' hot with indignation,
You bet your life, was that skypilot.

He says, fer any camel to
Go prancin' through a needle's eyelet,
Was easier, "than fer such as *you*
To squeeze in at the golden gate!"
And then he ripped the silver plate
From off the organ front, and threw
The thing a-rattlin' on the floor.
Old Stuff he got up in his pew;—

He picked that plate up with a smile,
Right off the carpet in the aisle,
And walked off grinnin' to the door.
You couldn't phaze a tough old limb
Like Stuff, a-flingin' plates at him.

But the Reverend gent got allfired hot,
And glared around with a venomous glance
As he opened the book at the very spot
He'd marked fer a hot tamale text,
St. Paul to the Thessalonicans:—
"All ripe fer hell, and who goes next?"
I don't exactly recollect,
But it was some words to that effect.

'Fore long the said four Michiganders
Come back agin to Scrambletown,
And pulled old Stuff's new organ down;
With a borrowed truck from Bishop Farr's,
And the help of a team and Slimjim Saunders
They carted the thing to the railroad cars.

Then the Reverend Wesley Cushionsmiter
He screwed his voice up tight and tighter,
And made shrill moan, like a sick coyote,
And the atmosphere and the cushion smote;—
He knew his job, he was no beginner—
He flung the curse and he hurled the bans

At the head of every old toughened sinner,
And down to hell he sent 'em all
With that bully Epistle from old Saint Paul,—
St. Paul to the Thessalonicans.

And soon thereafter it come to pass—
As the prophet remarks in the book o' Mormon—
That the mortgagee, old Reddy Gorman,
He went around and begin to sass
The Reverend gent fer his ready cash,
He wanted his money, that's what,—he said,
And threatened the Reverend's mug to smash;
At which the skypilot waxed sore afraid.

And the mortgagor and the mortgagee,
Somehow or other, they couldn't agree.
The latter party, he felt quite blue;—
Though the people all said 'twas abominable,—
He didn't know what the hell to do,
So he run the church fer a livery stable.
And old Lott Stuff was jest the man
To smile out loud at the parson's rage.—
The sinner—he lived to a green old age
And died on the Congregational plan;
While the Reverend gent sought a change of air
And accepted a call some otherwhere.

Fer the Reverend Wesley Cushionsmiter
Even if he was a seasoned, tough
And double-lined old Devil fighter;
What could he do with a case like Stuff?
And what was the good to bawl, and to maul
The pulpit cushion fer such a man
Who had no faith in the Spotless Lamb,—
A feller who didn't care a snap,
Who didn't give a C. G. damn
Fer the ancient epistle of old St. Paul—
A sinner who wouldn't give a rap
Fer a dead and gone Thessalonican!

DIAMOND RINGS.

There was us four—Si Smith and me, and Mike
Magoon and Steve. In that old schooner "*Ike*"
It was, we come that day from Syracuse
To Fremont Island in the Great Salt Lake,
To tend to business there about some sheep.
When we had fixed the deal, we couldn't well refuse
To stop all night, because there was a breeze
Right dead agin us. So we had to take
Things as they was. And as we couldn't sleep
Jest yet, we laid there takin' of our ease,
A-thinkin' of God's country in the East,
And smoked our pipes on that damstinkin' shore,
A-lookin' on the sluggish lake,—us four.

And all around so deadlike and so still,
No single sound from north, south, west or east—
No livin', movin' thing that came or went;—
The air across the water blowin' chill,
And all the stars out in the fundament.

Nobody said a word, fer Mike Magoon
He smoked a while and then looked at the moon
And smoked some more, and Si he didn't speak
To speak of nohow, bein' so much with sheep;
And Steve Renonc—not ten words in a week
Would that man talk, but then Steve thunk a heap.
And Steve Renonc could talk jest like a book
When he'd a mind to, and he'd mount and ride
The wildest cayuse anywhere, and cook
The finest soup from tough old bullock's hide.
He was a smart, sarcastical galoot,
Was Steve, and mighty allfired quick to shoot.

They say he had some scrap with eastern folks
Before he come to Utah. maybe so.—

Who knows, who cares much 'bout them things out
here.
I know, Steve Renonc wouldn't stand no jokes
From eastern tenderfeet,—that's what *I* know.

Long time ago, yet I remember well,
To Salt Lake come a chap with kinder queer,
Long tangled legs and great big, Roman nose—
It roamed all down his face.—He starts to tell,
Between the drinks at Albuquerque Bill's,
About young Renonc, this and that and those,
And talks a lot o' stuff there kinder loud,
And says if Renonc hadn't a been so proud,
He needn't gone from Boston, o'er the hills
And far away. Then Steve he jest come in,
And walked up quiet to the crowded bar;
And in a minute you could hear a pin
Drop in that crowd.
Soon as the feller chanced
To spy Renonc, he twisted and he pranced,
Jest like a kangaroo that's got a fit,
And bowed, and come cavortin' up to him;
"Why, Mister Stephen Renonc, how d'ye do?"
And Steve he says, a-smilin' sorter grim,
"I do assure you, sir, I don't know you,
And I will thank you if you'll jest admit
That I have never seen you, sir, before;"
And pulls his gun, which was to say,—"you git!"—
That chap lit out to westward that same day,
And Utah never saw them legs no more.—
That was jest Steve's aristocratic way.

Now when I found it gittin' rather drear
A loafin' there and mopin' at the moon,
I turns around and says to Mike Magoon,
"Wake up there, Mike Magoon," says I, "look here,
What would you do if you had piles o' gold?"—

Not as I b'lieved he'd answer right away,—
Not much!—It gen'ly took Mike half a day
To start his jaw, and to dig out the mould
From off his talkin' apparatus. Time
And time agin, I've knowed his tongue to balk,
And bein' all ready, hesitate to talk.—
Steve said one day, Mike's silence was sublime,—
And what Steve Renonc said was gen'ly right;
Mike always took his time.

But my remark
Woke up old Silas Smith. Gold was the spark
To set old Si ablaze.—That day and night
He had been drinkin' some, which made him doze,
But at the magic word, old Si arose
And set up on the sand, all straight and stiff.
Says he: "Jest what I's thinkin', boys, and if
I strike it rich I'll travel 'round the world;
I'd wait fer nuthin', but start off at once
And go to Yurrup, and then bust the bank
At Monte Carlo"—Steve's lip kinder curled.
"Oh yes," he says, "you damn old rusty tank,
And drink yourself to death in eighteen months."
We filled our pipes and waited fer Magoon.—
At last I says to him:

"Say Mike, how soon
Before you'd move when you have got the pelf?
How would you spend your dough?" says I, and Mike
Looked out across the water, dreamylike,
And talked like one a-talkin' to himself:
"Back in Newbrasky is a girl I know;—
Down in Uintah, where the fruit trees grow,
There is a place, some day I'm goin' to buy,"—
And then he stops, and starts agin, "and, maybe,
In course o' time, perhaps, there'll be a baby,"—
And cuts off short, and says no more.

And Si
He shuts his eye and kinder tries to wink,

And, holdin' up his flask to Mike Magoon,
He sings out, hoarse: "Down in Uintah Valley,
I'll live in clover with my Bridget Nally."—
"Shut up!" says Steve Renonc, "you drunken loon."
And Si shuts up and takes another drink.
Now my turn come and I begun, I think,
Jest like most people, when they are befooled
With dreamin' rich, like Vanderbilt and Gould,
To tell some dam fool things that I would do,
If I had lots o' cash.—No matter now.—
Then Si he says, "Now Steve, it's up to you."

"Oh bosh," says Steve, "It's no good anyhow,
And what's the use of all this foolish jaw?
You chaps 'll never have enough of gold
To buy a ticket back to Omaha.—
Except Magoon,—he stows his wad away,"—
And flings a rock out in the lake. And old
Si Smith says, "Come now, Steve, don't spoil the game,
Ef you had lots o' gold, now, come now, say—
How would you play your hand now, all the same?
Ef you had sold them mines down in Tooele
Fer twenty million dollars? say—to hell!"
Steve Renonc kinder snorts, and then he smole
A bitter kind o' smile.
"If I *must* play
Your dam fool game," he says, "I'd spend the whole
Darn blessed pile o' gold fer diamond rings."
And Steve picks up another rock, and flings
It far off in the gloomy, glitterin' lake.

"J. C!" says I, "You couldn't wear 'em, Steve;
Leastwise not all at once,"—"You jest believe
I'd wear 'em,'' says Renonc, "and I would take
Them stones to Denver, and I'd have 'em cut,
Each stone with edges on it like a knife,"—
And Steve stood in the moonlight, straight and tall,

And spread his strong, long fingers out; "that 's what!
I'd fill 'em full—both hands—yes, thumbs and all,
With them same diamond rings, you bet your life!"

"The hell you say!" says Si. "You'd be a sight
With all them rings a-bristlin' on your hands,
A-stalkin' round in Denver, day and night!—
But then I guess you'd go to furrin lands,
And show your diamonds to the Pope at Rome,"—

"The Pope be damned!"—and Steve's mouth kinder
twitches;—
"Then, boys, I'd take the fastest train fer home,
And shake hands with them east ern sons o'—guns!"

OLD GUNNYSACK.

On the outskirts of the village
In a tent, all by himself,
Lived old "Gunnysack," the hermit.
Hankered not for power and pelf,
Did odd jobs from morn till evening,
Slept all night on rough hewn logs;—
Was beloved of all the children,
And a friend of all the dogs.

Proud was he, of lofty bearing,
Strong and tall, and gaunt and lank;
Stalked abroad with scornful visage,
And they called the man a crank.
And the mighty hated, feared him,
For he spake both well and true;
But the poor, strange dogs all loved him,
And the little children too.

Spake the truth upon the highway,
As he felt it in his heart;
Scourged all hypocrites and sinners
With a keen and stinging smart.
Pompous priest and polished pagan,—
He consigned them all to hell;—
"Gunnysack," loved by the children,
And by all the dogs as well!

When at last this fierce old hermit,
In his tent lay down to die,
Law and Order and Religion,
All together, heaved a sigh.
And they sank him in the marshland,
To a dirge, croaked by the frogs:—
"Here lies one, loved by the children
And beloved of all the dogs!"

BACHELOR'S TEN COMMANDMENTS.

Tak good care of your digestion,
Don't be ashamed to ask a question,
Fear not Death nor Hell; don't fret,
Keep clear of borrowers and debt,
Don't expect too much of life,
Don't go to bed with another's wife.—
Perhaps you've heard all this before;
Hearken to it, friend, once more.—
Work by day and sleep by night,
Speak up boldly for the Right.
Love the poor—the rich be damned,—
Jesus Christ did so command.

These the ten a man should treasure.
Add two more, just for good measure:
Smoke your pipe and drink your toddy,
Don't care a damn for anybody!

H. A. JONES.

Of all the onnery new galoots
That come to Scrambletown that summer,
The meanest cuss,—you bet your boots—
Was H. A. Jones. He was a hummer!
This Jones he was the biggest liar
In all that country, all aroun';
And by the high celestial choir,
The liars there was hard to down,—
In Scrambletown.

They say he come from Alamosa,
And he put on a lot o' style,
He was rigged out—you would suppose a
Trim chap like that had made his pile.
He worked in Real Estate and Loans
And knew a shady trick or two,
And hustled round, this H. A. Jones,
To do up all that he could do—
And so would you.

Now there was lots o' Joneses there,
About that time. Seemed just like hell
Had sifted Joneses on the air.
So people, this Jones for to tell
From other Joneses, all a rustling
In corner lots and mortgage loans,
Said, when they saw H. A. a-hustling,
"See that?—That's 'Alamosa Jones',"—
In dulcet tones.

This Jones he wasn't much for show,—
He had no beauty spots or dimples,—
But everywhere where they could grow,
He had a lot o' fiery pimples,

Like young volcanoes on the splutter.
Of course it wasn't hardly fair,
But "Pimply Jones," you'd hear folks mutter.
You see, he wasn't populer—
The onnery cur!

And then they found another name,
Built on H. A., them two initials;
But if I was to tell the same,
Them new municipal officials
Would run me in. It's easy guessed,
And this the police might allow;
But if you've never been out West,
You'd never guess it anyhow,—
Say, could you now?

ROCKY MOUNTAIN SONG.

Oh, for the breezes of the Rocky Mountain height!
Oh, for the soaring of the eagle in his flight!
Where the peaks are all aglow, in the everlasting snow,
And the stars shine brightly through the dewless night.
Oh, for the Rockies, where you live without a care!
Oh, for the canyons and the mountain lion's lair!
Where the skies are ever blue and nobody cares for you,
And the scalawags drift in from everywhere.

CHORUS:

Farewell, the wooded hill; farewell, the blooming vale;
Farewell, the ebbing and the flowing of the tide.
Adieu, the sandy shore and the fierce Atlantic gale.
And the harbor where the ships at anchor ride.
Farewell, my charming eastern love, farewell!
Adieu, dear memories of pleasure and of pain!

Farewell, ye crowded streets, where care and trouble
dwell,
Oh, the Rockies!—Let me see them once again!

Bear me, my cayuse, through the desert and the hush,
Far through the balmy night, where mountain torrents
gush;
And the sands shall be my bed, with the saddle 'neath
my head,
While the coyote's mournful wail floats o'er the brush.
Oh, for the Rockies, where the tenderfoot is flayed!
Oh, for the country where the thimblerig is played!
Where the Mormon elder thrives with his half a dozen
wives,
And the gambler and the hobo never fade.

Give me the Rockies, where the sun shines all the year!
Give me the western maid, who loves without a tear!
With her style so debonair, and her wealth of fluffy hair,
And a hand that guides the broncho without fear.
Dear are the joys of youth that vanish one by one,
Green are the meadows where the eastern rivers run.—
Oh, but once again to ride, with my rifle at my side,
On the trail that leads toward the setting sun!

SALTWATER VERSE.

NAVY SONG.

A health to thee, old Ocean gray!
I love beneath thy dashing spray
To sail into the dawn of day,
Upon thy flood;
To see, when day is drooping low,
Upon thy bosom's restless flow,
The sunset's fierce expiring glow
Burn red as blood.

CHORUS:

Drink to the glory of the brave!
Dark looms the shadow of the grave,—
Red is the goblet's glow.
And blood is red and hell is black,
And damned be he who turns his back
Or quails before the foe.

My pledge to thee, old Ocean drear,
I love thy thundering voice to hear,
And see thy flashing visage cheer
To bloody fight,
While deeps engulf the lurid wrack
And deafening peals of battle crack
Thy heaving breast,—Oh trackless track
To glorious might!

To Perry, Lawrence and Paul Jones
What pæans, wafted o'er thy zones,
Oh wave, in fierce triumphant tones
Break on thy crest!
To Farragut, Decatur,—loud
Thy surges chant; to all the proud
And valiant hosts that in thy shroud
Forever rest!

My pledge to thee forevermore!
Oh let me cleave thy billows hoar,
And when I hear the cannon's roar
Call o'er the deep
To battle, victory and the grave,—
Then let me die among the brave,
And sink beneath thy seething wave
To endless sleep!

MY CHESAPEAKE!

When shadows fold the northern woods,
Beneath a dismal sky,
And o'er the lake the lone loon broods
With melancholy cry,
I long again to see the gleam
Of thy fair waters, and to dream
Upon thy shore the livelong day—
My own belovèd Chesapeake Bay!

I see the wildfowl on the shoal,
I feel the balmy breeze,
Methinks, I hear the Oriole
Sing in the holly trees;
And with faint murmurings, strangely near,
At eventide I seem to hear
The Spirit of thy waters speak—
My dear, my distant Chesapeake!

A vision fair of stately ships
A-sailing to the sea,
Of beaming eyes and loving lips;
A soothing melody
Of warmth and beauty everywhere—
No chill upon the summer air,
No chill upon the heart, so bleak—
Ah, Chesapeake, my Chesapeake!

To see once more upon thy shores
The rich magnolias bloom,
To see the great sad sycamores,
The fireflies in the gloom,
The ripeness of the luscious peach;
To hear that low, soft, Southern speech—
Oh, when shall I behold the day,
And thee, my noble Chesapeake Bay!

When shall I see thy waters lave
The seagull on the wing,
And hear, across thy moonlit wave,
The dusky boatmen sing?
And am I nevermore to sail
On thy white bosom, through the gale,
Where thy proud rolling waters seek
The Ocean main, my Chesapeake!

THE WRECK OF THE "CREST OF THE WAVE."

The "Crest of the Wave" was a fine new ship,
And as from the posts her hawsers slip,
The song that only the sailor sings,
Floats o'er the bay— a "heave and a ho
And a heave again, and away we go,"—
As the ship from her mooring swings.

And the sailors run at the captain's beck,
As he stands at the rail of the quarterdeck
In the freshening morning breeze.
The new white sails in the sunlight gleam
While the trim ship glides into the stream,
Bound out to the southern seas.

Though young in years, yet firm and brave
Was the master bold of the "Crest of the Wave,"
And he seemed so glad and proud
Of his handsome ship, as he waved his hand
To his friends on the fast receding strand,
And smiled on the cheering crowd.

Not many months had passed away,
When out from the Capes of the Chesapeake Bay
The pilots bent their sail,
To where, in a storm of the night before,
A homebound ship on the reef-locked shore
Was cast away, in the gale.

On the brink of the desolate, wreck-strewn strand
Two corpses lay in the glittering sand;
They gathered them in a shroud,—
The master and mate of the "Crest of the Wave."—
Ah, woe for the young, the noble, the brave,
The daring, the handsome, the proud!

And woe for those who are left behind,—
The tender and loving of womankind,
Whose hopes are engulfed in the sea;
Who have pondered the day and dreamed the night
Of a fullrigged ship on her homeward flight,
And the joy that was to be.

Oh, great is the weight of human woe,
And deep is the anguish that women know
In their hearts' own misery.
But greater than these and deeper far
The surges' unfathomed mysteries are,—
The silent depths of the sea.

The tides are flood, and the tides are flown,
And the wind in a gruesome undertone
  Sighs over the sailor's grave;—
The sun goes up, and the sun goes down,
And the seasons and sands and breakers drown
  The wail of the "Crest of the Wave."

KEDGE'S STRAITS.

The queerest pilot on the bay
  Was old Sam Lamb of Hankmatank;
He never had a word to say.
    So long and lank

Was Sam, no berth would fit his height.
  So just before he went to sleep,
He'd have to fold his bones up tight,
    All in a heap.

And he was one, was Captain Lamb,
  By trouble ne'er a whit perplexed;
He didn't seem to care a d———
    What happened next.

His mouth was shut up like a clam,
  Excepting when he ate and drank,
Or took a chew,—this Samuel Lamb
    Of Hankmatank.

One time there crawled in through the fog
  A freighter, come from Zanzibar;
Her captain was a jovial dog,
    A jolly tar.

He was so fat he scarce could walk—
  His ship, the *Mars* of Liverpool;
He tried to make this pilot talk,
    The blarsted fool!

High on the bridge the pilot stood,
  His head up almost out of sight;
The steamer's whistle "booed" and "booed,"
    All through the night.

"I say, my man, where's Kedge's Straits?"
  The master shouts it up on high,
And then expectantly he waits
    For Sam's reply.

The fog comes down as thick as rain,—
  "I say, d'ye think we'd better sound?"
The captain tries him once again;
    The pilot frowned.

" 'Tis Kedge's Straits I most do fear,
  So tell me where it is, Sirrah!"
Cried this bold, trading buccaneer
    From Africa.

The pilot still made no reply;
  "Assuredly the beggar's dumb,"
The captain thinks, "suppose we try
    A little rum."

And pipes the steward for some grog,
  To limber up this pilot's tongue;
The ship, at ten knots through the fog,
    Bowls right along.

Into the pilot's saffron face
  He sees the steaming liquor flow.

"She'll never stand this blooming pace,—
Say, dontcherknow!

And where is Kedges Straits, you cur;
Why won't you tell me where we are?"
Thus bawled the angry mariner
From Zanzibar.

For though a stranger in this mere
And this his first trip to the States,
He knew he'd have to keep her clear
At Kedge's Straits;

And, by the way, we must confess,
Perhaps he wasn't such a fool,
This master of the *Mars* (S. S.)
Of Liverpool.

But Sam spake neither aye nor nay
Nor cared for skipper nor for crew,
And when he'd stowed the grog away,
He took a chew.

The captain, Oh, he swore amain
And frightful language spluttered forth,
And called for "Kedge's Straits" again;—
Sam pointed north.

"But where and when?" he shrieked anew,
This skipper, furious and fat,
"You d——d old yellow mummy, you,
Come, tell me that!"

And d——d the pilot and the crew
The ship, the fog, and his own eyes,
Then, with an oath of lurid hue,
He d——d the skies,

And spent the night and half the morn
In blasphemy and sacrilege;
The pilot smiled in silent scorn,
High on the bridge.

Nor did the captain's efforts prove
Successful towards afternoon,
And then 'twas plain he couldn't move
This pilot loon.

So now the skipper ceased to bawl—
It wasn't any use, you see—
But on his crew began to call,
Immediately.

The fog came down with all its strength,
And up the bay the steamer sped;
You couldn't see but half a length,
Or so, ahead.

"This pilot is so taciturn,
At Kedge's Straits we'll strike the bar;
The chap don't know nor care a durn
Just where we are.

The fog is thick—I will be brief—
We're twenty-two foot even keel,
On Kedge's Straits we'll come to grief;
That's how I feel."

Thus spake this brave old mariner,
And added just a word or two:
"Pray now, consider and confer,—
What shall I do?"

The sailors shout with one accord:
"Oh, Master, let us heave the lead,

And heave the pilot overboard;"—
"Heave 'way!" he said.

Thus stoutly give the word, did he,
While forward rushed the doughty crew;—
Just then the ship stopped suddenly
With much ado.

And at the moment when she hit,
(It *did* seem just a trifle late)
Old Captain Lamb drawls out: "That's it,—
That's Kedge's Strait!"

THE OLD LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER.

Deeprooted in its bed of rocks,
Amid the shifting sands,
As one that Ocean's fury mocks,
The lighthouse stands.

And off beyond the dismal dunes
The keeper's cottage lies,
Where, sadly 'neath the changeful moons,
The stormwind sighs.

A tried and sturdy keeper he
Who guards this lonely shore;
He is as old as well may be—
Fourscore and more.

On yonder knoll his loved ones sleep,
A wife and daughters three;
And yet he never stops to weep—
Ah no, not he!

As one whom storms have ceased to vex,
This hoary keeper stands;
Stout as the timbers in the wrecks
That strew the sands.

He saw each to perdition sail
On wings of evil luck;
Recalls the name, the rig. the gale,—
And how she struck.

Two sons lie buried 'neath the wave
And no one cares for him,
Except it be that shiftless knave,
His helper Jim.

Jim helps the old man tend the light,
And calls him "Captain Pap,"
And when the old man heaves in sight,
Jim takes a nap.

So far apart their musing lies,
Both men are grown quite mute,
But sometimes, when the sunlight dies,
Jim plays the flute;

And then the lighthouse keeper dreams,
With gaze afar and fond,
Off eastward, where the starlight gleams,—
And far beyond.

The tender steams in from the sea,
Pap's larder to renew,
Each month, and then he speaks, may be,
A word or two.

And when she leaves he follows her
With calm, indifferent gaze,

Until her smoke is but a blur
In twilight haze.

And off to westward, barren land,
And eastward, barren sea;
Above, around, on every hand,
Immensity!

The old man climbs the lofty stair
His feet so oft have trod,
To sit beneath the flashlight's glare,—
Alone with God.

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